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# THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

*By the Same Author*

RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY

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# THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

## AN INTRODUCTION

BY

LEWIS GUY ROHRBAUGH

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
IN DICKINSON COLLEGE

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*To*

MY FATHER

WISE IN COUNSEL, STEADY
IN PURSUIT OF THE BEST

School of Theology

# PREFACE

THIS volume, entitled *The Science of Religion,* aims at a reasonable explanation of religious phenomena, depending chiefly upon psychological findings, but at the same time using the contributions of other sciences. In pursuing a psychological study of religion experimental possibilities are limited and the student must depend in a large measure upon biographies, autobiographies, sacred literature,—representing doctrines of belief and ceremonies of worship,—and questionnaires, all these representing an important body of religious facts. In a study of the subjective aspects of religious experience psychology is the only science that has made much headway and thus when investigation is restricted to this particular category the terms psychology and science may be used interchangeably. Psychology of religion, however, reaches further than an analysis of religious experience as such and must proceed to a study of many objective phenomena, such investigations leading to the discovery of valuable data, which, when carefully analyzed, bring out into the clear the changing, probably growing, religious attitude of the individuals or groups concerned. Often it is necessary to describe these objective phenomena in order to understand the mental processes, directly and indirectly related to them, and which condition the inner, spiritual experiences. Thus getting at the mass of material included in the scope of the psychology of religion calls into play the findings of the different sciences. The Science of Religion then, as understood in this volume, really represents this broader interpretation of the psychology of religion, and sees geology, astronomy, physics, biology, history, play-

ing helpful rôles, and calls into service the customary scientific methods, such as observation, hypothesis, definition, description, comparison and contrast, analysis, synthesis, introspection, and verification, religious experience as such, however, depending largely upon psychology for its description; that is, this volume aims to represent a systematized body of knowledge, which, while aided by the investigations of the different sciences, is organized chiefly on the basis of psychological principles and methods.

To the student inclined to a strict positivism, it may seem unscientific to assume the existence and activity of a supernatural power, which unfailingly makes for righteousness, and which is unhesitatingly called Mind, Spirit, God. But this presupposition should not be objectionable, except in those cases where the term God is weighted down with traditional misconceptions. The assumption of such an agency represents a common procedure in the best of scientific research. There are many hypotheses,—"gap-fillers,"—set forth in science which become dependable as working bases, and yet have not been, and probably never will be, empirically established, possibly may be abandoned eventually. An expert physicist told me one time that occasionally in his field they even use inconsistencies in attempting the discovery of truth; that is, hypotheses are adopted in working out certain problems when it is known that these speculations will not hold good elsewhere. They are used because they constitute the best alternative; they work better than any other suppositions. To me personally, it seems that the converging lines of testimony through the ages point to the justification of the assumption of a Something in Nature that "speaks back," and represents a source of supreme satisfaction in human experience.

It is fairly common to-day to reduce psychology to a mechanical basis and then attempt an analysis of religious

experience from this standpoint. Unquestionably much of religion can be explained in terms of natural mental processes, but if this is all there is to it, and if the tendency of religion to build around supernatural powers—and this has always been the prevailing notion—is wrong, then practically all the standard definitions of religion will have to be changed, which means that people in general have been fooled through the ages. If psychology can be reduced to a clear case of mechanical stimulus and response, then it becomes simply another branch of biology; and if religion is altogether subjective and can be fully explained by this type of psychology, then there is no such thing as religion, as commonly understood, and the study of this most significant of all human experiences becomes really the psychology of delusion. Somewhere between the gullible credulity of unyielding traditionalism in religion and the refusal to believe on the part of positive science, there is a "golden mean," representing the path along which life's highest values lie. It is some such middle-of-the-road policy that I have aimed to follow in the preparation of this material, and in doing so have worked in harmony with my own convictions.

The questions and suggestions which appear in this book have been prepared with the purpose of guiding the reader into a further study of problems suggested in the different chapters, and in each case these suggestions will call for about as much time and thought as the material in the chapters which they follow.

L. G. R.

Carlisle, Pa.
October, 1927.

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# THE SCIENCE OF RELIGION

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S. Parkes Cadman

## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

With the revival of the classics in the Renaissance (1453-1690), there began a new era in the history of the human race, and the universe as well. New ideas began to take form—noticeable even earlier than this—which when growing to maturity, placed a new man in a new world. The modern scientific movement began in the humanistic period (1453-1600) of this "Revival," headed by such men as Copernicus, Bruno, and Brahe, assuming significant proportions in the natural science period (1600-1690), under the leadership of Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Huyghens, Newton, and others. It was only natural that this new interest in the possibilities of science and the tremendous emphasis on scientific procedure should manifest themselves in educational materials and methods. Thus contemporaneous with this movement there arose an interest in a type of education which aimed to stress the truth and reality of the life of that day, rather than that of old Rome. This new tendency in education, known as Realism, showed itself in three different developments. The first, headed by the Dutchman Erasmus, the Frenchman Rabelais, and the English poet Milton, has been called humanistic realism. These leaders agreed with the classical humanists in believing that the avenue to worth while knowledge was through the Bible and the old classical studies, but did not agree with them in believing that the real purpose of education was to reproduce the old Roman

The Rise of the Modern Scientific Movement

life; and instead of form and style stressed a type of knowledge that would prove useful in everyday living. The second development, called social realism, was led by the Frenchman Montaigne and the Englishman Locke. Here the purpose was to do more than to turn out scholars and professional men; the chief aim was to develop a practical type of education which would offer proper training for the boy who was to lead the life of a gentleman. This program was narrow and incomplete in that it made no adequate provision for the education of those children who did not come within the category of "future gentlemen." The third stage in which the realistic movement manifested itself has been called sense realism. The outstanding leaders here were the Englishman Bacon, the German Ratke, and the Moravian Comenius. These men were urgent in emphasizing the application of scientific method to education. Comenius, the ablest leader in this school, worked along lines genuinely scientific and anticipated much that is best in modern education; he insisted that the school should be graded, instruction should be according to Nature, and all material should be useful.

The foregoing facts bespeak a tendency away from linguistic and cultural studies, toward what was felt to be a more practical type of education, which means that the emphasis on classical literature came to be superseded by an interest in the sciences. And the impetus received in those early days has not spent its force up to the present time.

With the rise of the scientific movement so long ago and its increasing momentum through the years, with the marked progress made in so many fields of research, and in the face of systematic progress made in general education, it is a strange fact, a seeming violation of the law of cause and effect, that not until about thirty years ago was scientific

The Rise of the Science of Religion

method seriously applied to a study of the nature of religion. It is true, work had been done in the history and philosophy of religion, also a good sociological approach made, but it was not until psychology took up the task that real headway was made in an analysis of individual religious experience. The work done hitherto had been nearly altogether objective in character. While psychology also has had to depend much upon objective facts for its description of religious consciousness, it is true, nevertheless, that it was only with psychology's help that it became possible to attempt a real analysis of the subjective aspects, which was altogether necessary if the heart of the problem was to be reached. Two general reasons may be given as to why scientific progress in the study of religion was retarded. First, many students passively assumed the position that religion was "from on High" and thus despaired of achieving success in an understanding of its mysteries. Again, others hesitated to undertake a scientific study because so many people were suspicious of such an approach and insisted that to attempt an analysis of sacred truth would be sacrilegious.

The first systematic and convincing suggestion of the possibility of studying religious phenomena scientifically came from the pen of G. Stanley Hall in 1891, in an article having to do with the religious training of children. A few years later, J. H. Leuba, E. D. Starbuck, and G. A. Coe, believing that religious experience could be made to yield to psychological analysis, blazed the trail in this virgin forest. Then in 1902, William James, in his Gifford Lectures—*The Varieties of Religious Experience*—made a classic contribution to the success of this new work. As a result of efforts such as these religion has come to be seen in a new light. No longer is it regarded as a something which a person "gets," but instead is looked upon as a fact native

to the human heart; not as a by-product of life but, as it were, the nucleus around which the biggest ideas of life are supposed to gather. This attitude toward religion has opened the way to an emphasis on the conception of the immanence of God, which helps to make this Agency seem more real to human beings. All this points to religion as a natural, practical factor in life, which is quite different from the conception held fifty or more years ago. In those days religious leaders believed and taught that the big purpose of religion was to get people ready (saved) for heaven; and then depended primarily upon a knowledge of the Bible as the means to this end. But to-day religion is looked upon as being significant for life as well as for death. And since it has come to be regarded thus, it is engaging the attention of leading educators, who see the necessity of finding some place for it in relation to general educational programs. No more significant problem faces the educator to-day than the necessity of working out a correlation in which religious instruction, including moral training, finds its place as an integral part of general education, and in which the presentation of religion, in proper fashion, will be guaranteed to rising generations. In every such effort an important requirement resting upon the shoulders of those entrusted with the task of organizing and administering religious education is an adequate provision for the training of teachers and leaders who will possess both a knowledge of religion—which is inclusive of religious experience—and teaching skill.[1] It is

The Old View of Religion Versus the New

[1] Religious knowledge is interpreted here as representing not only an *intellectual* but also a *feeling* grasp on religious truth. To know religion means more than a knowledge of accumulated interpretations, particular beliefs, creeds, and other fundamental facts; these truths must be felt in the individual's own experience, worked over in terms of his own spiritual life, so that he possesses the actual values in his own "heart." This gives the teacher a consciousness of ownership, without which he is unable to speak with authority.

not just a case of knowing "how to teach" but also "what to teach"; not one or the other, but both, and both together. Religious workers need to be trained in the art of imparting truths, but a knowledge of the "how" will mean very little if the instructor does not possess the "what," and thus is not able to demonstrate these values to others. After all, religion is caught rather than taught; the religious spark which belongs naturally to every individual is stimulated and guided more by deeds than creeds. There is a noticeable tendency to-day to overlook this fact, and in so far as this is true, there is a move toward a mechanized system of religious education. In the prize essay submitted to the National Education Association in 1915 on "The Essential Place of Religion in Education—with an Outline of a Plan for Introducing Religious Teaching into the Public Schools," assuming that the child is naturally religious and that it is possible for society to contribute toward his development, the position is taken that instruction is not sufficient; the educational program should be such as to provide encouragement which will help the child to respond to his environment. Every presentation of religion which is unwilling to pin its faith simply to head knowledge but aims also to make the influence of the teacher and the environment in general a possible laboratory training for the student, where the truths are visibly applied, undoubtedly presupposes a broad background of knowledge on the part of the teacher,—a strong mastery of the "what." This means more than a good understanding of the Bible; full religious interests take us beyond a knowledge of the Christian faith, this broader foundation being necessary to an understanding and appreciation of the Christian religion as such. All this necessitates an excursus into the general content of religious education as represented by philosophy and science.

The "How" Versus The "What"

If this side of religious training were stressed a little more, young people when getting into science, especially geology and biology, would escape the well-known traditional confusion. They would be spared this floundering experience, and many of them be saved from skepticism and even worse, simply by being helped to think through problems about which they are anxious, and which they are sure to settle in some way.

It seems that a great deal of help to meet this vital need can be secured from a study of such courses as History of Religion, Psychology of Religion, and Philosophy of Religion—the three great methods of approach to a study of religion—especially if this work is presented from the standpoint of consistent Christian interpretation. The nature of the work done in such courses is suggested by their very titles. For instance, in the History of Religion the method of procedure is similar to any other work in the field of history. New light dawns upon Christians when studying the genesis and growth of religion, and the concrete development of particular religions. A better understanding and appreciation of anything always follows an acquaintance with the soil from which it came, and the conditions with which it has been associated. Some such perusal of facts as is suggested here would bring people way past the place where they would be inclined to talk about the true and false religions. The Christian believes, and perhaps rightly so, that his religion is the best, but at the same time should not be allowed to feel that all truth has been revealed in his faith, and that God has not dealt at all with the peoples of other religions. As a study of these religions reveals truths similar to those of Christianity, it becomes clearer that God is no respecter of persons, and of one blood has made the nations of the earth; also that the "fullness of time" had to do with people other than

The History of Religion

the Hebrews. For example, in Zoroastrianism, from which group came the three Wise Men, there is belief in a coming Messiah; man is free to do right or wrong; Ahura Mazdah is looked upon as the one Supreme Deity, the all-wise Creator; he wants people to be righteous and will help those who will help themselves; and in the end they will win out in the fight with Ahriman, the evil spirit, after which there will be established a perfect world which will continue forever. Again, Confucius taught the Golden Rule in its negative form,—"That which I do not wish others to put upon me, I also wish not to put upon others." He took the general position that kindness ought to be recompensed with kindness and injury with justice. Lao-tse, the founder of Taoism in China, took still higher ground and taught his followers to recompense injury with kindness. This is not far removed from the "second mile" philosophy of Jesus. Meeting facts such as these is no reflection whatsoever on the integrity of Christian truth; but instead reveals beyond doubt justification for believing that God has been in touch with individuals and groups of other religions; and no matter whether they have worshiped in terms of Mazdah, Marduk, or what not, they have been reaching out after and found in part the God of Christian Revelation.

This type of study makes the Christian religion fuller of meaning; it gives the individual a broader conception of God, and aids him in better understanding the comprehensive, all-inclusive program which the Great Mind expects him to help carry out. Then too, if the Christian religion is to perform its task as a missionary agency, it is necessary to know the beliefs, customs, and developments of other religions, in order to build upon the truth which they already have. This seems proper because a first-class presentation of the Gospel is really a grafting-on process, and does not call for the elimination of other religions, to

be followed by a presentation of our own. Unquestionably this whole background is essential in the general work of religious education, and should be given young men and women early, rather than after they have grown up believing that Christianity is an isolated movement, altogether different in spirit and purpose from the other religions of the world.

The Psychology of Religion

In the Psychology of Religion, a systematic study is made of religious phenomena from the standpoint of mental life. While the aim is to make the approach genuinely scientific, it is possible to present the work in such simple fashion that it will be a help even to those who have had only a limited training in psychology. Here, in an intensive piece of work with a particular problem, the modern scientific method of procedure —observation, hypothesis, deduction, verification—is used as far as possible. Many baffling obstacles are met which do not obstruct the progress of the average special science. If any problem is to be worked out empirically, the first step, observation, should be possible under both natural and controlled conditions, especially the latter, because it should be possible to reproduce the same phenomena under identically the same conditions, as often as desired. This is difficult, however, in a study of religious experience, and the best that can be done very often is to study the attendant phenomena and get after the immediate problem indirectly. While this fact makes the procedure for the Psychology of Religion more difficult than that of some other sciences, it is not an insurmountable difficulty.

The primary reason why more experimental work has not been done, is that the men who are interested in this realm of research are carrying heavy schedules, and are obliged to give only marginal time to these interests. General progress awaits the day when students are turned loose

with plenty of time and equipment at their disposal, and can go at this the same as any other research investigation. If religion is real, and if the Christian religion is true, and it seems to be, there need be no fear of the discoveries and conclusions reached by honest scientists—students who are unprejudiced and go only where facts take them. Any investigator who has an "ax to grind" is bound to be a negative factor in the search for truth, because his conclusions will not only be open to question, but some one else will probably have to do the work over again.

It must not be expected of science that it will be able to get into the very heart of all religious experience, but it can help in the discovery of facts which will aid in the establishment of many worth while beliefs, and also contribute toward a finer interpretation of truths, whose meanings hitherto have been hazy. And so, just as science plays an incalculable part in the progress made in every department of life and the world, so in religious education, if all possible progress is to be made, we have a right to expect science to do its part, and open up avenues of understanding which will help in the appreciation of life's values. There are many truths we cannot hope to grasp with finite minds and thus, as intimated above, many facts in religion which science cannot analyze; but those which can be given a scientific basis not only will be gripped more firmly, but also can be more easily and efficiently presented to others. For this reason it seems that young people, and older folks as well, ought to be acquainted, in elementary fashion at least, with the methods and conditions having to do with the scientific discovery and description of religious phenomena. There is no doubt that the individual's religious experience can be made to grow with increased knowledge of this sort. After working in this field students have remarked as follows: "Conversion now is more real to me";

"I haven't believed much in revival meetings, but now I do," etc. All such statements bespeak increased spiritual insight.

The Philosophy of Religion

In philosophy, interpretation is the keynote, and thus in the Philosophy of Religion an attempt is made to interpret religious experience, this endeavor finding its significance in the life of humanity rather than in the life of the world. Is there reality in religion? If so, what is the meaning of religious phenomena? Some of these experiences are taken up and an endeavor made to find their significance in life, this being important because it seems that life's richest values are found in the realm of religious activity. Many people who have not had the advantage of education just naturally philosophize and need guidance along this line. Here are met problems in which the average person is vitally interested and concerning which he will draw conclusions. This being true, group leaders, educators, and ministers, are trying to help young people into a program of belief which is expected not only to bring satisfaction to the individuals themselves, but at the same time increase their usefulness.

The Great Need for a Knowledge of Religion

There is no more pressing need to-day than for a leadership that is willing and able to think things through—helping to see to it that the ship of truth is not freighted with dead weight, and at the same time saves every ounce of her precious cargo; that is, the world to-day needs persons who are able to hold to the good in the old, and at the same time appropriate all that is worth while in the new. While much progress has been made, there is much of a discouraging nature. If it were possible for an all-capable physician to put his hand on the pulse of the average religious individual's willingness and ability to explore in the field of fundamental values, what would the reading show? Are the majority of minis-

ters and laymen to-day thinking for themselves in religion, or are they seeking the exhaustive type of material—that of the predigested sort? In the pulpit is the number sufficiently large of those who are working away at the interpretation of Biblical truths, and thus leading out in the discovery and conservation of eternal verities? That is, are there enough who are living and preaching on the level of reflection and interpretation as over against the group level of thought, and thus creating a demand on the part of people for a knowledge of religious fundamentals? The fact that many ministers' libraries are loaded with volumes of sermons and other secondary sources instead of Biblical and religious Encyclopedias, Commentaries, Expositor's Greek Testaments, etc., tells its own story. And this type of educational lethargy seems to be bearing fruit in the fact that too little emphasis is being placed on a well-trained ministry in some of the denominations. It may be that in the sentence immediately preceding, the order of cause and effect should be reversed; but if this were the case, it would make no difference in the general situation. The question is often raised to-day as to whether in educational growth, the ministry has made as much progress as the laity in recent years, considering what is expected of each group. A representative denomination recently published a survey of the quality of the training of its ministers, and some of the facts brought to light give occasion for serious thought. It hardly seems fair to the interests of humanity in this day of advance and opportunity to entrust any individual with the interpretation of sacred truth whose educational attainments have to be liberally evaluated in order to seem to be the equivalent of a High School education, and yet this is being done. These are facts which builders of religious educational programs must frankly and seriously face.

Many people to-day, as in the past, are interested in a knowledge of solid facts, and every endeavor possible should be made to meet this need in a satisfactory way. Young men and women are going to form conceptions, true or false, relative to the fundamental truths of religion. Consistent religious beliefs do not have to flee in the face of modern thought, and this fact needs to be made clear. If this is to be done, it would seem that the next step in religious education should be a more elaborate provision for general guidance and training having to do specifically with religious foundations. And so, while not forgetful of the significance of technique, the "how," the following chapters look in another direction, namely, toward an emphasis on a group of vital topics having to do altogether with the content, the "what," of religious education.

The Next Step in Religious Education

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. In the history of religious education, which has been stressed the more, technique or content? Analyze the present-day situation.
2. What is meant by the science of religion?
3. Show how it can contribute to religious progress.
4. On the basis of a distinction between psychology, history, and philosophy, differentiate between the aims, technique, and materials of the three fields: the psychology, history, and philosophy of religion.
5. Give the comparative ages of the psychology, history, and philosophy of religion.
6. Explain the statement that the purpose of science is description, that of philosophy interpretation; also the statement that science is interested primarily in quantitative aspects, philosophy in qualitative.

7. Defend the following: The science of religion builds chiefly around the principles and methods of psychology.
8. Show how the psychology of religion must depend in a measure upon history.
9. With the relation of philosophy to science as a point of departure, point out how the philosophy of religion draws heavily upon the psychology of religion.
10. Name several pioneers in the study of religious experience from the standpoint of mental life, giving a statement as to the nature of their work.
11. On the basis of experimental endeavor, show the difference between the procedure in a science of religious phenomena and a science whose body of data represents material values.
12. Is religion subjective or objective, or both? What would be the answer of a mechanistic psychology? The history of religion's answer?
13. Must religion be discounted if it refuses to yield completely to the efforts of scientific analysis? If it refuses to yield at all? Reasons for your answers?
14. Show how the minister should be acquainted with the science of religion.
15. What are your suggestions for a better religious education program for the youth of to-day?

## CHAPTER II

## THE CREATIVE PROCESS

THE caption under which this chapter is written is to be regarded as rather inclusive, representing not only the origin but also the development of the universe and its life. This broad interpretation of the creative idea seems justifiable because in the light of modern discoveries, creation is not a fact belonging to the past but instead is a process going on at the present time; new things are continually coming into being.

**The Problem of Origin**

In modern thought there is a strong tendency to neglect the problem of origin, some students indifferently and some purposely failing to give it consideration. If, however, there is interest in a consistent and well-rounded program of knowledge, the question as to the origin of things must necessarily be given a hearing. It is a simple matter to take facts just as they are found, and even though they may lend themselves to a careful analysis which results in a fairly clear understanding of their nature, complete satisfaction cannot be realized until some answer has been made to the question, Whence came these facts? There is the feeling on the part of many that this phase of the problem of creation cannot be made to yield to scientifically attempted solutions and therefore it might just as well be left alone. There are other problems, however, which are seemingly hopeless, as far as scientific analysis is concerned, and yet we continually endeavor to round out satisfactory conclusions.

A scientific approach to an analysis of religious phenom-

ena, even the strictly psychological study, should presuppose a knowledge of the origin and development of the materials constituting the "physical" world in which religious beings live, and from which in some mysterious way they seemingly have come. And if an attempt to understand the origin should be dismissed as too speculative, then a knowledge of the development must surely be regarded as within the reach of science. While the immediate chapter is given over to a discussion of this whole problem of origin and development, the following chapter is taken up with a study of various standard conceptions of the Supernatural, expressing, as they do, the different stages in the development of the religious consciousness. Even a purely psychological study of religious experience should be preceded by, and really is a part of, this general scientific analysis of existing phenomena, and especially should this procedure be observed if it is the person's first systematic attempt at a study of religion.

That people have always been interested in a theory of the origin of the world is shown by the fact that in the different religions (and in early philosophy as well) there are many attempted explanations as to how the world came into being, most of these creation-myths of course being very crude. In the religion of Babylonia several of these myths are found, the most popular one suggesting that in the beginning there was a watery chaos, in which there were mingled together the waters of Apsu and Tiamat. Gods were born to these two and later on as the supremacy of the original pair was threatened, they decided to destroy the gods whom Tiamat had borne. Marduk was selected by the gods to represent them in the fight. He overcame and killed Tiamat with his spear; he split her body in halves and of one part made the heavens and of the other part the earth.

Babylonia

Vedas

In the religion of the Vedas is met the belief that a creator brought the world out of non-being, and then again the idea that he furnished the material for creation out of his very self; from the different parts of his body were made the different parts of the universe. In successive periods various names were given this creator.

Chinese and Japanese Myths

In the Chinese cosmogonic program the universe was generated from two souls or forces, Yang and Yin. Much later we find a first or ultimate principle suggested in which both of these originated. Japanese cosmogony shows the effect of Chinese influence and seems to have been copied.

In Norse Mythology

According to Norse mythology there was in the beginning a great abyss, on one side of which was heat and on the other cold. Sparks from the side of heat fell on the side of cold and as a result of this a huge giant was generated, from whose body the earth and its different parts were created.

Genesis

In Genesis is found the statement of facts from which has been formulated the Christian conception of creation. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," etc. This is the most refined and best cosmogonic program presented anywhere; in fact, on the basis of a reasonable faith, the only satisfactory answer to the question, How came the world to be? And right in line with the belief of many other religions that the world came from a god or gods, Genesis suggests that when the question is raised, Whence came the world? it can be answered, God—by Him and from Him.

Most Christians stand solidly behind the facts as represented in Genesis but when an attempt is made to interpret

the method of creation, differences of opinion very soon become evident. For a long time the idea prevailed that as the result of a divine fiat the world immediately came into being, peopled and complete just as it appears to-day; also that it was created out of nothing, this being considered the exact teaching of the Bible. But there is no evidence in Biblical truth which compels one to feel that this is the true interpretation, and many students clearly see that this conception has problems and truths to face with which it cannot square. Facts point to the necessity of believing that bringing this world into being and to its present status has taken a countless number of years; and the creative program, instead of being executed suddenly and by a separate act has been a growing, developing process and continues to be so even to-day. And so, based on a mistaken conception, seemingly, the general notion that all things were made just as they now are, has been handed down from century to century. This idea deserves the same credence as the belief that the world was created 4,000 years B.C., which can claim no justification other than that of an accepted traditional theory. Those who originally looked upon this latter belief as a fact did so simply because early editors of the Bible on their own initiative inserted in the margin imaginary dates corresponding to events.

Prevailing Notion of Creation

As far as the creative program is concerned the main question shapes itself something like this: Did the Creator in creating the world and things of the world execute His program all at once or by way of a gradual unfolding? When God said, "Let there be a firmament," "Let the earth bring forth grass," "Let us make man in our image," does it mean that then and there all these things suddenly came rolling into being as they now are? or, did God proceed to this great task carefully, gradually,

The Method of Creation

laying foundations for the carrying out of this gigantic program? The latter would seem to be the case. Great tasks are not accomplished in the twinkling of an eye. In all Nature we meet the growing, developing process. This is true in every realm,—physical, moral, religious, etc. A multiplicity of illustrations could be set forth bearing favorably upon this idea. Rocks and coal have been laid down through the ages. We grow into manhood and womanhood. Jesus was teaching the lesson of growth when saying, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear"; also, when he likens the kingdom of God unto a grain of mustard seed. According to Old Testament presentation, when the world was in need of a Redeemer, God did not immediately prepare the world for Christ's coming by bringing into being all at once a type of Hebrew mind sufficiently matured to be able to assume the necessary responsibilities, but instead, God worked in terms of a perfect understanding of the natural, growing consciousness, and this method took time. So we see the "Chosen People" gradually climb step by step from the level of passive conscience to that of revenge; then to the level of justice; and finally when the fullness of time was come, Jesus appeared, and then they were ready to live on the highest level, that of love and forgiveness. So it would seem that all things are resultants of the past, and if God has had a part in the world's general program, and it seems He has, it is reasonable to believe His method of working has been the growing, developing process.

The Genesis statement of creation, interpreted as representing a gradual development, runs parallel with the best of modern thought. In science there are two outstanding hypotheses endeavoring to explain the origin and development of the universe.

1. Nebular Hypothesis.—In an effort to account for the origin of the solar system, Laplace in 1796 advanced this hypothesis which has been generally accepted by science until in recent years. This view is as follows: Originally there was a molten gaseous nebula extending as far as the orbit of the furthermost planet, thus covering all the space of the present solar system. That is, everything which now exists at one time constituted a sphere of gas, which was rotating at an enormous rate of speed. As the mass cooled it naturally contracted and thus the rotating speed increased, which caused the gaseous sphere to bulge at the equator. When the centrifugal force exceeded the centripetal a ring broke, detaching itself from the main body. This ring then broke at its weakest point and formed a gaseous spheroid, becoming our planet Neptune. Other rings in a similar manner were thrown off and became planets, and just as these large rings were thrown off from the main body, they as planets in turn threw off other smaller bodies, the sun being the remnant of the original gaseous mass. As the gas cooled a liquid was formed and finally a crust. According to this view, at the present time there is liquid inside the earth, with a surrounding solid crust. The cooling process is still going on and eventually it will be too cold for the earth to support life. How long has it been since the earth cooled to its present condition? Some proponents of this hypothesis would say the earth is about 20,000,000 years old. This, however, will not harmonize with scientific discoveries and facts; the earth is believed to be much older.

Nebular Hypothesis

2. Planetesimal Hypothesis.—Chamberlin and Moulton were the authors of this view which is summed up as follows: By means of improved photographic methods it was seen that space is full of nebulæ, many more than was originally supposed; it was also seen

Planetesimal Hypothesis

that the most prominent nebulæ are spiral, which may be solar systems in the process of development. The spiral nebula has two arms projecting on opposite sides of a central nucleus. Here then, theoretically, is the starting point of our solar system. There were four nodes on each arm, a node being an aggregation of planetesimals, little planets, continually gathering other little planets into the group. In the space between the different nodes there were probably many planetesimals, all moving in their individual orbits, perhaps elliptical, in the same direction around the sun. Because of the attraction of the little planets for one another their orbits continually crossed and naturally overtake (not head-on) collisions resulted, the smaller body becoming a part of the larger. Then in the process of development the nodes continually gathered small planets unto themselves and when the majority of planetesimals became a part of the nodes we had a solar system. When the earth was in the node stage it was simply a group of little planets. When coming to be as large as the moon, as a result of absorbing planetesimals, which would be one-eightieth of its present size, it probably had the same characteristics as the moon to-day, there being no life on the earth at that time. When coming to be as large as Mars, which would be one-tenth of its present size, the earth probably had an atmosphere and plant life. How long has it been since the spiral nebula came to be a solar system and the earth attained its present size? This is thought to be about 100,000,000 years.

The universe then consists of a multitude of solar systems, moving through space with their own directions and velocities; and although having been moving for so long a time they have not come near enough to our solar system to have an appreciable influence. This reveals the magnitude of the universe, too vast to be explained or even conceived.

Does this not suggest the boundlessness of space? and if infinite space, also infinite time? One step further, and we touch the fringe of that bigger fact,—infinite life. And if all these, then naturally an infinite Agency. This, together with the fact that the Planetesimal Hypothesis allows for a very early appearance of life and does not suggest a planet too cold some time in the future to support life, gives greater occasion for an optimistic view of life and the world than can be found in the Nebular Hypothesis.

In these presentations of science our interest centers in the fact that all the evidence points to the earth as having come to its present size and condition as the result of a growing process representing millions and millions of years. Somewhere in this program of development, from chaos to order, life appeared. And at this time the question naturally presents itself, How did life get its start? There are three general theories having to do with the origin of life on the earth.

**Theories Concerning the Origin of Life on the Earth**

1. Life germs came to the earth from some other planet. That is, life was created in some other world and carried here in meteorites, etc. While never having had much of a following this view has been altogether discarded. It would not help any way with the real origin of life, simply suggesting how life came to be on the earth. If this were accepted as a satisfactory theory in explaining the origin of life here, the question would continually come up, How did life originate on the planet, or planets, from which it was brought to the earth? and the problem of the real origin of life would still confront us.

2. A divine creative act, which is self-explanatory.

3. Spontaneous generation. This means that the first life germs on the earth were spontaneously generated at a favorable time, when conditions were just right, and thus

all life has descended from these original life germs. The earth always had the potentialities of life which manifested themselves as soon as conditions became favorable. This theory does not say that spontaneous generation of life is going on at the present time; it is believed that all life now comes from life. This simply represents the method by which the first life germs originated, and there was only one time when the situation, offering the possibility of life, could have happened. "Such is the nature of cell division, of sexual reproduction, of growth and heredity, that it would be contrary to the course of Nature to suppose that it was ever afterward necessary for it to occur again." [1] It seems, however, that the most satisfactory theory relative to the origin of life is to be found in a combination of the second and third theories,—divine creative act and spontaneous generation. God created life and spontaneous generation was the method by which He brought it forth.

There is then a wonderful continuity not only in the development of the earth but of life itself. For definite proof that there has been a gradual growth of life from simple beginnings, let us examine the story as told by the geological chart, on the basis of evidence as found in the rocks. This shows clearly the advance from the simple to complex forms of life.

### ARCHEOZOIC ERA

Over 100,000,000 years ago. The fossils of the igneous rock have so changed that none of them belonging to this era has been found.[2] Abundant traces of life, however, have been found,—marble and graphite. Marble being a product of limestone which comes from life—from an ac-

[1] *The New International Encyclopædia,* Article on "Spontaneous Generation." Dodd, Mead and Co.

[2] All distinct traces or relics of animals or plants of the past which have been preserved in deposits or rocks are called fossils.

cumulation of skeletons and shell fragments of marine animals deposited on the ocean bottom—would indicate there was life in existence during this era. Also, Archeozoic graphite, which is nearly pure carbon and is of organic origin, the resultant of the decomposition of plants and animals, bespeaks life in this era.

### PROTEROZOIC ERA

This era represents a duration of millions upon millions of years. Fossils have been found, belonging to the lower divisions of the invertebrates. These fossils, the first to be found, show there was much life before this.

### PALEOZOIC ERA

**Cambrian Period:** A few million years duration. Abundant fossils. Seas were teeming with life, which belonged to the highest divisions of invertebrates,—the Arthropoda group, chief of which was the trilobite, a three-part creature which is extinct to-day.

**Ordovician Period:** A few million years duration. All groups of invertebrates existed. Trilobites were abundant but not so much as in the Cambrian period. At this time they had learned to coil. Evidences of fishes found and also evidences of land plant life but not of land animal life.

**Silurian Period:** Several million years duration. All groups of invertebrates. Corals found. Fishes more abundant. Distinct evidence of invertebrate land life of the scorpion type.

**Devonian Period:** Several million years duration. All groups of invertebrates flourished. Corals very abundant. Fishes supreme; the age of fishes, which were heavily armor-plated. No remains of higher vertebrate forms, but tracks of Amphibia group found (toads, frogs, etc.). Vegetation abundant.

**Carboniferous Period:** Several million years duration. All invertebrates and all vertebrates except birds and mammals. Remains of reptiles and Amphibia. Plants—fern-like plants, clubmosses, horsetails. These were as giant trees and from them our ferns, etc., have come.

**Permian Period:** A few million years duration. A glaciation period. Difficult time for life. Many reptiles. They being cold-blooded could live in this cold period. Many types of animals became extinct, due to the extreme cold.

### MESOZOIC ERA

**Triassic Period:** A few million years duration. Reptiles abundant. First remains of mammals found. No birds as yet.

**Jurassic Period:** A few million years duration. Reptiles abundant. So many and large they lived in sea, land, and air. At their maximum here. Birds appeared for the first time. A few mammals. Hard for them to live with reptiles. All divisions of life for the first time.

**Cretaceous Period:** Several million years duration. Reptiles very abundant. Only few mammals found. Grasses, bringing in changes in animal life. Flowers, and with them bees and other similar types of animal life. Forests began to look modern.

### CENOZOIC ERA

**Eocene, Miocene, Pliocene Periods:** A few million years duration. All the great groups of animals were in existence. Mammals flourished. All mammals, including Primates,—the highest division of mammals. No evidence of human species, but the forerunners were in existence.

**Pleistocene Period:** A few million years duration. All life and plants of to-day, and many species which are now extinct. Human species found in Java and Europe but not in America.

**Recent Period**: From 25,000 to 40,000 years duration. Life of the now. Relics of man found in North America only in the recent period.[3]

These facts in the geological chart have been organized not according to any theory but on the basis of the remains of life which have been found in rocks laid down in these different periods. Does the story of unfolding life as told here conflict with that represented in Biblical truth? Not at all, but rather helps us to understand the Genesis account. It is fully understood that parallels are not always satisfactory and their use sometimes even unwise, but here the relation is so interesting that the reader's attention is called to the following:

"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. . . . Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth after his kind; and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and everything that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: And God saw that it was good. And God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness," etc. According to this quotation God said, "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life"; "Let the earth bring forth the living creature," etc. And in this same quotation we read,

Genesis

[3] This outline is adapted in a large measure from material as organized by Prof. G. F. Kay, head of the Department of Geology, State University of Iowa, and Iowa state geologist. Prof. Kay, however, is in no way responsible for the application made of these facts in this chapter, most of which will be found in any good introduction to Geology.

"God created [made] great whales, and every living creature," etc. Shall we say, as some do, that "God created" means that he did so, suddenly and by separate act? If so, what is to be done with the statement that God called the waters and the earth to bring forth? It seems the only possible interpretation is that God created by causing the waters and earth to produce life which is the unfolding method as represented in the chart given above, man being the last and highest type of life in the creative plan. It is possible and reasonable "to believe that it was at that place where in the process of development from the 'dust of the earth' man came into consciousness, that the great Spirit began to deal with man as a person and that Biblical literature begins its history of the human race; that it was when man stepped forth a conscious being he became a living soul, made in the image of God." [4]

Fundamental in the program of creation which is being set forth here is the fact of development, a growing process,

**Evolution**

through which God has been bringing things to higher levels of realization. This developmental process which involves continuous progress can be given different names; it should be called evolution. By this is meant orderly change, in the way of growth and development. The term etymologically means an unrolling or unfolding. It is simply a method and seems to be God's method of working in the universe. This is not a mechanical type of evolution which makes things to run in machine-like fashion, but instead, a vitalistic principle and purpose are seen in things, which are God at work. This program then should be called Theistic evolution.

**Kinds of Evolution**

The whole field of evolution falls into three divisions, which is the same as saying there are three kinds. They are as follows:

[4] *Religious Philosophy,* Rohrbaugh, p. 113. George H. Doran Company.

1. **Cosmic evolution.** This is evolution as the astronomer and astronomic geologist see it, and has to do with the development of the cosmos or universe, the earth, planets, sun, moon, stars, according to the Nebular or Planetesimal Hypothesis.

2. **Organic evolution.** This is evolution as the biologist sees it, and has to do with the changes in animal and plant life, from one kind to another, the results of which were seen in the chart as higher types of life appeared in successive periods.

3. **Mental or general evolution.** This is evolution as the psychologist, anthropologist, ethnologist, sociologist, etc., see it. The great achievements of man correspond to mental progress. Here are evident the stages through which man has passed, from mere animal existence to higher ideals, interests, institutions, etc., to the place where spiritual forces find full expression.

The attitudes toward evolution vary so greatly that it seems to be the part of wisdom to inquire at this time as to what status it really should be given in the category of knowledge, on the basis of its real worth. Before the reader comes to a conclusion relative to this question let us examine the three distinct steps on the way to established knowledge—hypothesis, theory, fact—and arrive at a mutual understanding of the meaning of these terms.

Status of Evolution

1. **Hypothesis.** This means any conception, among alternative ideas, which is set forth as a tentative working basis in the endeavor to discover truth. It is simply a provisional explanation, a good guess, and becomes worthless just as soon as it conflicts with a single fact or when some other idea seems to work better.

2. **Theory.** When the tentative working basis (hypothesis) proves satisfactory time after time and thus is

verified, answering the purpose better than any other conception, it becomes theory.

3. Fact. When the theory so stands the test as to be unquestioned, holding the field alone against other hitherto alternative possibilities, it comes to be regarded as a fact. Here all lines of testimony have converged toward one common end.

On the basis of the above representation of these terms we are now ready to ask, What status should be given evolution,—hypothesis, theory, or fact? Some say it is merely a guess but practically all the students who have worked in the general field proclaim it the most satisfactory working basis, and many give it the classification of fact. Independent of prejudice in any direction and in the light of facts the reader is asked to draw his own conclusion. An unbiased attitude is recommended here because there are those who berate science in general and evolution in particular simply because they seem to operate against certain beliefs to which these individuals hold and which they hesitate to surrender, not realizing that what one should believe is far more important than what one wants to believe. These individuals seem to be unmindful of the debt religion owes to science, as new scientific truths have helped in the formulation of better religious attitudes. The progress of religious knowledge has cost a big price and it has taken stalwart souls to carry the burden of persecution. The student of history will not forget the storm caused by the scientific teachings of Copernicus, Galileo, and others, and how their efforts in the search for truth were obstructed by religious dogmatists who, as we see it to-day, were but beating their wings against the prison-bars of spiritual lethargy and ignorance. As science helped into a better understanding of our earth, solar system, and other heavenly bodies in space, what really is found in the heavens

Religion and Science

above and the earth beneath, it turned people from a belief in a sky-God and sky-heaven and a hell in the bowels of the earth, all of which was too materialistic. And since that time belief has been conforming more and more to the teachings of Jesus,—that God's real world is spiritual and His kingdom is in the hearts of men. To-day God's immanence is getting just as much and probably more emphasis than His transcendence. It was hard to break through the maze of tradition, council interpretations, etc., but seekers after truth were bound to be rewarded.

The emphasis on evolution is characteristically modern, but the reader must not feel that the evolutionary idea itself is new; it is as old as Greek philosophy. It may be a surprise to some to learn that the church father Augustine, who had so much to do with the organization of Christian theology, and later Thomas Aquinas, believed genuinely in evolution. A brief historical sketch of the idea of a developing process will make clear the fact that it is by no means new.

Evolution not New

Historical Sketch of Evolution

**Anaximander (600 B. C.).** "Living creatures arose from the moist element as it was evaporated by the Sun. Man was like another animal, namely, a fish, in the beginning."

Anaximander

"The first animals were produced in the moisture, each enclosed in a prickly bark. As they advanced in age, they came out from the drier part. When the bark broke off, they survived for a short time."

Further, he says that originally man was from animals of another species. His reason is that while other animals quickly find food by themselves, man alone requires a lengthy period of suckling. Hence, had he been originally as he is now, he would never have survived.

He declares that at first human beings arose inside of

fishes, and after having been reared like sharks, and become capable of protecting themselves, they were finally cast ashore and took to land.

Other animals came up from the waters in the same way as man. It seems that as an undercurrent in Anaximander's explanation is the idea of adaptation to environment and the "survival of the fittest." [5]

Empedocles (490-430 B. C.). At first the parts of the different animals appeared; naturally this was a stage of incompleteness. There were heads without eyes, shoulders without arms, etc. Due to the principle, Love, this miscellaneous group began to take shape, and while in the beginning there were many improper combinations, these parts finally found their proper connections and animals came into being. At a certain stage new animals ceased to appear as a result of the intermingling of the elements, and were produced by generation instead. In this process of development from chaos to order the idea of the "survival of the fittest" seems to have prevailed.

Empedocles

Anaxagoras (500-425 B. C.). There was originally a moist element, in which chaotic mixture were the possibilities of plants and animals. Anaxagoras was the first student to introduce Nous (mind) into his program. This Nous was responsible for bringing harmony out of chaos. From the air came the seeds of plants and animals which later sprang up as the plants and animals of the earth, man being included among the animals.

Anaxagoras

Aristotle (384-322 B. C.). He believed that life originated as the result of the changes of inorganic matter. Animal forms had succeeded one another, the inferior and less perfect being followed by the more perfect, and they furnishing the foundation upon which

Aristotle

[5] This is according to the Theophrastean account and is quoted from Burnet's *Early Greek Philosophy*, pp. 72-73. Adam & Charles Black, London.

higher life would be built, the highest of all being man. Causing and directing this development was the efficient Cause, God. In the whole program was purpose.

Lucretius (99-55 B. C.). He taught the spontaneous generation of the world and life. Back of everything in the world is something else which offers adequate explanation for the product. He postulated a void in the beginning. He ruled out a creative intelligence and ascribed the facts which exist to chance combinations of atoms. From the early chaos came the heavenly bodies first, and out of the earth came all forms of animals and vegetable life, something on the basis of natural selection, or perhaps the trial and error method.

Lucretius

Augustine (354-430 A. D.). It is natural to expect that a mind like that of Augustine, influenced as he was by Greek philosophy, would try to reconcile the Greek and Genesis cosmogonies. He believed the teaching of Genesis to be that in the beginning there was chaos, void, and that God placed within this the possibilities which later grew up into the heavens and the earth, and finally came to be the world as we know it to-day.

Augustine

Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274). Since Aquinas reorganized for Christianity the philosophy of Aristotle, and greatly influenced of course by Augustine, it was natural for him to be influenced by the cosmogonic programs of these men. He believed that in the beginning the Creator planted only the seeds of things which germinated, developed, and grew to maturity.

Aquinas

Associated with the beginnings of modern evolution are such names as Buffon (1707-88), Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), Lamarck (1744-1829). Evolution would have gotten its real start with the Frenchman Lamarck and he instead of Charles Darwin

Buffon, E. Darwin, Lamarck

would be looked upon as the one who introduced the idea had it not been for the powerful influence of the scientist Cuvier who opposed and ridiculed Lamarck's work, and thus evolution had to wait for such champions as Darwin, Wallace, Spencer, etc.

Cuvier

Since the days of Darwin the belief in evolution has grown by leaps and bounds and now is well established in modern thought. But even so, there is considerable agitation against it, due to a misunderstanding of its meaning and its application to life and the world. These criticisms, however, are of small concern to those people who do their own reading and thinking. But since so much is being said to-day against evolution it would seem desirable and justifiable to pause at this time and examine some of these negative statements. Probably the best way to proceed would be to select a carefully prepared presentation of some influential, representative anti-evolutionist. Thus we turn to an article on "My Views About Evolution," by William Jennings Bryan, appearing in the August, 1923, issue of the *Popular Science Monthly*. Judging from the title of the article, also that it was written in response to an invitation from this magazine, it should contain its author's chief arguments against evolution.[6]

Bryan

Early in the article the writer states his aim, saying, "My purpose is to show that science, as well as the Bible, condemns evolution." The reader is asked to keep this stated objective in mind. It continues: "Most of those who declare that they favor it (evolution) think it means growth, like the growth of the chicken from the egg; or development from without, like the improvement of the automobile. They are mistaken. 'Evolution' is the word used by scientists to describe the hypothesis which links all life together

[6] All the quotations which follow are from this summary in the *Popular Science Monthly* and are used by permission of the Editor.

and assumes that all species are developed from one or a few germs of life by the operation of resident forces working from within." There is good reason to protest this definition, because, as stated earlier in this chapter, there are several kinds of evolution—cosmic, organic, and mental—although organic, having to do with animal and plant life, which this definition represents, is the one to which reference is usually made in the ordinary attack on evolution. The treatment in this article, however, does not stay altogether with this definition, because later on in the article reference is made to the "evolutionary hypothesis" as trying to explain "the heavenly bodies, strata of rock," etc.

After paying his compliments to the scientist saying that "guessing is his middle name," the author of the article selects Darwin as the representative of evolution and criticizes his "sexual selection" and "natural selection." Right here is the serious blunder so many make in attacking evolution. All evolutionists agree that the fundamental fact in evolution is orderly change but by no means do they agree as to how and why this change takes place. Some may say the orderly change, in specific cases representing ages perhaps, is a continuous process, others that it takes place by continuous leaps and bounds. Then too, some may account for the successive changes by pointing to the environment, some to use and disuse, some to an unfolding principle or a combination of these, while others, like Darwin, Wallace, and Weismann, may say natural selection alone will serve. These things being true, it would seem unfair and unscholarly to select organic evolution, and then single out one theory, Darwinism for instance, and use that as a synonym for general evolution, and that being mechanical and based on chance, say it holds good for all evolution. It is just like saying there is only one religion, Christianity, and then selecting one denomination and insisting upon using this par-

ticular denomination as representing everything for which religion stands. Natural selection is inadequate for several reasons and there are many evolutionists who do not believe in Darwinism, with its natural selection, nor in any other mechanical evolution, any more than do radical anti-evolutionists.

Continuing further, "Those who believe in the evolutionary hypothesis reject the Mosaic account of man's creation by separate act of the Almighty and give him a jungle ancestry"; again, later, "they (evolutionists) solemnly declare that the Bible account of man's creation is a lie." It seems clear that these statements are not correct; some evolutionists may, but evolution does not necessarily reject the Biblical account of man's creation but instead helps us to feel that the "gradual growth belief" throws light on the method of the Almighty's working. The writer in question says that evolution is based on circumstantial evidence and "the trouble with circumstantial evidence is that one fact will overthrow any amount of it," but he fails to produce this fact. He feels he has set forth the needed fact when saying "no species has ever been traced to another species." Suppose this to be true, does that disprove evolution? Let us imagine a bandit escaping after committing a crime, and every bit of evidence, and much of it good, pointed to his being in a large near-by city, would the fact that he had not been found by a certain time prove he was not there?

After confining his definition strictly to life germs and species, the author of the article goes to chemistry to disprove evolution, and water is used as an illustration. He asks for an answer to the question, "What was water before it became water, and what will it be when it ceases to be water?" He continues, "Chemistry has not discovered any law of evolution. It has registered the various

gases and diagramed the movements of the molecules but it has discovered no pushing force at work in the original elements of which all things animate and inanimate are composed. Chemistry is an exact science; it mocks the atheist and brings confusion to the evolutionist." In this last sentence, "it mocks the atheist" is as meaningless as "it brings confusion to the evolutionist" is untrue. If Mr. Bryan believes science when it says that all things animate and inanimate are made up from the original elements, why is it hard to believe animals are in a linked series? Is he correct when he says science (chemistry) has found no "pushing force" at work? He should read after Ostwald, one of the greatest chemists of modern times. The energy concept is a genuinely live topic in modern thought. The thing that attracts attention most in this connection is that the attitude manifested in this treatment of evolution seems to approve the idea that there is no "pushing force" in things (in the elements of which all things are composed). Is there then no vitalistic principle, no vital impetus, no entelechy—no purpose in things? This sounds like mechanical materialism which usually keeps company with atheism. This philosophy is confusing to the Christian and confusion leads to skepticism and this to worse. Furthermore, in the treatment of chemistry the writer refers to the "1740 electrons which make up the atom." What atom is referred to here? He surely does not mean there are 1740 different kinds of electrons entering into the make-up of atoms, because it is the belief of science that the electrons of the atoms are all the same, no matter from whatever element's atoms they come. If he means there are 1740 electrons which make up a particular atom, his meaning is just as hard to apprehend, because it is generally believed that hydrogen's atom, which is the lightest, has only one electron, and uranium's atom, the heaviest known atom, has

ninety-two electrons. He probably has his statement confused with the belief that the electron is apparently about $\frac{1}{1850}$ the mass of the hydrogen atom.

Such statements as the following stand alone crying for proof: "The natural and logical tendency of evolution is to produce agnosticism and agnosticism is merely a way station on the road to atheism." Again, he says, "If a man believes in evolution, he can go to the zoölogical garden on Sunday morning and standing in front of a cage of animals, speculate on how far he has come, on his superiority over his ancestors." The writer of this article claims the Bible as good authority, and so do many students. We find it (the Bible) saying, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground." So, it would give us even more material for reflection if on a Sunday morning we should go out and gazing at the "dust of the ground" speculate on how far we have come; here is suggested a much longer road than from animal to man. With no intention of discussing the unfortunate monkey-gorilla-ape way of putting things, it is simply suggested in passing that from the standpoint of interests, seeming purposes, modes of living, etc., there is greater difference between the lowliest savage, wild folks who are said to spend much time in trees, and a fine type of Christian gentleman than between the monkey and the savage. When we read, for instance, Seton's *The Ten Commandments in the Animal World* and find animals with definite attitudes toward disobedience, lying, stealing, etc., and even the tendency in emergencies to throw themselves upon the mercy of higher powers such as man, it makes us feel that possibly here are the raw materials and principles out of which have grown the moral and religious tendencies in man, and also that while the journey from our "forerunners" to man may be great, it is not inconceivable.

In the last section of the article when we should expect

the argument to be clinched, we read: "The great need of the world to-day is to get back to God—to a real belief in a living God. Evolutionists either deny the existence of a God or put Him so far away that consciousness of His presence in the life is weakened, if not destroyed." Is this true? Theistic evolution gives God the biggest kind of a place in the work of the world. There are many other groups that could be referred to here instead of evolutionists and the mark would be hit just as well. Then in the next to the last paragraph of the article we read: "The world needs the Christ of whom the Bible tells, evolutionists rob the Saviour of the glory of a virgin birth, of the majesty of his deity, of the triumph of his resurrection." Here the writer has fixed his eyes on the grandstand and has forgotten his subject, "My Views About Evolution," here at the close of his article when he should be logically marshaling his best facts. Why bring in the virgin birth, and the deity of Christ? What do they have to do with evolution? Absolutely nothing. It is unfortunate for truth's sake that we have to find all these poured into the same crucible. Many people believe in God, the Bible, the deity of Christ, etc., and also in evolution and have the consistent right to protest any careless presentation, crowded with irrelevancies and inconsistencies, which pictures these beliefs as mutually exclusive.

Reaching his climax in the article the writer says, "The world needs a full-statured Christ, not a man aspiring to be a God, but a God condescending to be a man." What bearing does this statement have on evolution? It is not only beside the point but is meaningless as well. Does the world need a God condescending to be a man? According to the Christian, was not Christ God incarnate? Has Christ's mission failed? Does God need to become man again? If so, this position is more in accord with the teachings of

Northern Buddhism than Christianity. On the other hand, the world may not need men who aspire to be God, but it surely needs men who aspire to be God-like. And is not this the ultimate goal? "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

The reader's attention has been called to the stated purpose in writing this article, namely, "To show that science, as well as the Bible, condemns evolution." We have gone through the arguments carefully and fairly, quoting what seem to be the main points, and on the basis of sane judgment there is not one fact which contributes to the realization of this purpose. It is easily understood, however, how this same material would make a very favorable impression if presented eloquently from the platform, with the speaker accepted as an authority, which so often means that the efforts of the critical faculty of the audience are completely inhibited, and thus statements are accepted without any examination whatsoever.

For a similar evaluation of Mr. Bryan's attitude the reader is referred to an editorial in the September, 1923, issue of the *Century Magazine* in which Mr. Glenn Frank suggests "six elements of the Bryan paradox" and discusses them with keen analysis. They are as follows:

Mr. Frank's Appraisal

"First, Mr. Bryan is a liberal in politics, but a conservative in religion.

"Second, Mr. Bryan thinks realistically in politics, but emotionally in religion.

"Third, Mr. Bryan trusts human nature in politics, but distrusts it in religion.

"Fourth, Mr. Bryan exalts freedom in politics, but defends authority in religion.

"Fifth, Mr. Bryan makes righteous action the test in politics, but sets up rightness of belief as the test in religion.

"Sixth, Mr. Bryan is most religious when he is discussing politics and least religious when he is discussing religion." [7]

It seems that the criticisms offered against evolution are shallow and untrustworthy. It is an interesting fact that those who say most against it have not turned a finger toward first-hand investigation, while those who have done original research are practically unanimous in its favor. It seems to be a case of opinions against facts. Shall we say it is too bad for the facts? Evolution seemingly has come to stay and it would surely be better for religionists to welcome the light rather than have it thrust upon them. Progress is impeded when we insist upon looking away from the direction in which facts point, simply because we have become accustomed to looking in a certain direction. Conservatism can be wholesome, but that type which refuses to accept anything new becomes an obstacle to religious progress. It seems to be true that the conservative tendency shows itself more in religion than anywhere else, due to the fact that religion is regarded as very significant in life, and also because religious ideas impress themselves upon a person when he is very young, probably during childhood, which means that particular nerve paths are opened up along which impulses travel for a long time and thus it becomes very hard, almost impossible, to think and do things other than in the old way. Religious beliefs and practices thus become deeply ingrained and persons refuse to change their attitude. And so, the belief in a sudden creation having prevailed through the years, it is natural and easy to discount any opposing theory. Our young men and women, however, who are working in biology and geology, are concluding that the evidence for

Conclusion Concerning Evolution

[7] Quoted by permission of the Editor.

the unfolding idea is good, and refuse to be dictated to by those who are out of touch with the situation. Instead of a Creator working as with a magic wand, they prefer to see God in things as well as above things, causing "the waters and the earth to bring forth." And this type of Creative Process which represents God as causing the universe and its life to unfold is best represented by the term *creative evolution.*

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Show how the "problem of origin" is related to religious phenomena.
2. Is there evidence of the psychological unity of man in the fact that the different peoples have generally formulated creation stories?
3. Compare the Nebular and Planetesimal Hypotheses on the basis of affording occasion for an optimistic view of life and the world.
4. Show how astronomy, geology, and biology, make their contributions to a study of religion.
5. Define evolution. Suggest causes and methods by which the different theories explain orderly change.
6. Contrast Darwinism with Theistic evolution.
7. Compare the ideas of sudden and gradual creation. Which affords the bigger conception of God?
8. Discuss mind's place in the developmental program.
9. Discuss progressive revelation in the Old Testament, made possible by the growing Hebrew mind as it moved from indifference, through revenge and justice, to a level of love.
10. Does the idea of a linked series cheapen man? If so, and if human beings are God's offspring, how do you think He feels when perceiving the depths to which some persons stoop?

11. Discuss the following proposition: The fact that animals naturally obey laws against disobedience, stealing, impurity, murder, lying, and coveting, and often in emergencies throw themselves upon the mercy of a higher power for protection, suggests a *fundamental* linkage between man and other animals. Does this fact tend to encourage or deny the belief that religion has an instinctive basis? (See Seton's *Ten Commandments in the Animal World.* A very small book published by Doubleday, Page and Company, Garden City, New York.)
12. Does the theory of evolution encourage or obstruct the belief in the immanence of God?
13. Is future evolution likely to be more physical, mental, or social in character?
14. Distinguish between creative evolution and a limited program of development as seen in Aristotle's conception. (See Cushman's *Beginner's History of Philosophy,* Vol. I, pp. 179, 180.)
15. Does the mind create or discover truth, or both? Contrast the old Greek conception relative to this point with the modern psychological view. (See Cushman as per above, p. 147.)
16. Discuss the possibility of studying mental evolution by way of objective phenomena.
17. If evolution is so old, and much can be said for it, why is there objection to it?
18. Give several reasons for exceptional conservatism in religion.
19. Do you think an appeal to Mr. Bryan's attitude as authority in religion affords a good example of the fallacy of *argumentum ad verecundiam?*
20. Why do religious customs or practices change more slowly than religious beliefs? (See Pratt's *Religious Consciousness,* pp. 85, 86.)
21. Discuss the influence of environment upon the mental attitude of an individual.

22. Give an illustration of a growing mind which was unable to find satisfaction in the religious code of its day. What would you expect to happen in a case like this?
23. Discuss the comparative negative results of being too critical and too uncritical concerning things religious.
24. Show how *dubito ut intellegam* may be productive of good. Describe Descartes' method of working out his program of reality. (See Cushman as per above, Vol. II, pp. 81-83.)
25. Explain the possibility of agreement between science and religion, if there is a proper understanding of both.
26. How may tested standards of value become instruments of progress?
27. Explain how science, including science of religion, has suffered from traditionalism.

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## CHAPTER III

# THE DEVELOPING CONCEPTION OF GOD

### (The Growing Religious Consciousness)

THE title of this chapter could just as well be called "The Development of Religion" or "The Development of Religious Consciousness." In fact some students probably would prefer one of these titles to that which is used. It seems best, however, to work in this field from the angle of the growing idea of God, because the God concept is central in religion; in fact there is no religious consciousness apart from the idea of a power or powers beyond the individual's control and upon which he feels dependent. So as one studies the developing conception of God he studies the growth of religious consciousness as well.

In beginning this discussion, the reader's attention is called to the fact that this treatment has to do with a *growing conception* of God and not a developing God. With an increasing intelligence there is naturally associated an improved understanding of Truth. It seems that the Agency throws out the challenge to a higher and fuller vision and gradually humanity climbs to the mount of realization.

The series of stages indicated in the following outline is by no means offered in an arbitrary spirit. There is plenty of room here for differences of opinion, and I have no quarrel with any one who may choose to disagree. Especially concerning the first three steps there is far from a uniform understanding. Some students do not begin with manaism but rather see in animism or totemism the source

of religion. Others may see manaism and animism originating and growing side by side, also declaring that there are instances where animism has no connection with religion. But in every such case, if all facts were known, it probably could be shown that the animism has a vital relation to the religious beliefs and practices.

It would be difficult to find all these stages, especially the earlier ones, standing out clearly and distinctly in the religious development of every group. All the stages, however, are to be found in the general development of religion, each succeeding step representing a higher conception of the Agency. And as a group or groups climb to higher levels there is much overlapping. Several stages may be represented in the same people at the same time. In fact those who have reached the highest point of attainment may show clear traces of influences characterizing the lowest level.

Magic is not being treated as such in this connection because it seems to have no genuine place in a study of the developing conception of God. The spirit of magic is contrary to the fundamental attitude of religion. In magic the person tries to create a spell, to force the issue, while the religionist humbly entreats the agency, either for help or in an effort to appease. It seems that while magic and religion have existed side by side, if there is any connection in origin between the two, priority must be given to religion. There is no good evidence to support the theory that religion came into existence because people were unsuccessful with the magical method of procedure and in despair and desperation turned to religion. *This belief cannot be made to harmonize with the general scientific attitude which ascribes to religion an instinctive basis,* saying that it is a blending or a composite of instincts.

Magic and Religion

The tendency to root religion in magic seems to be as

far from facts as the belief which says religion originated in a pre-logical state, when man did not know the meaning of contradictions. Just as the belief in a limited God has been set forth by a few students primarily because of the help it seems to give in an explanation of the problem of evil, so the theory that religion originated in a pre-logical state can offer no better justification for its existence than that it helps to account for the accumulations in religion which are of a negative character, all of which can be explained in other and better ways. Giving negative elements in religion too much consideration is often a costly mistake. Bigger than the fact that religion seems to be overloaded with contradictory factors is the reality of its positive content, which constitutes a stalwart challenge to all persons, not excepting those possessing the highest type of intelligence, and in which content all such are able to find complete satisfaction.

## MANAISM

This is represented as the lowest level on which any type of religious attitude is to be found. It is a wide and indefinite field and could just as well be called pre-animism, representing all religious situations below the animistic stage. I am calling this the *mana* stage, in harmony with a common tendency in the study of the origin and development of religion. The term *mana* was found to be in general use by the Melanesians, and since a study of the religion of these peoples has afforded a very general avenue of approach to a better understanding of the religion of primitive groups, the conception of *mana* is fairly well standardized and the name is thus chosen to represent similar situations in religion.

Manaism

As suggested earlier in this chapter, all religions build around some power or powers, upon which people seem to

depend, powers which can act for good or evil. This power (or powers) is conceived of as being available for the use of those in need of help. In manaism this power is called *mana*, and is simply an abstract, impersonal, mysterious force. The idea of *mana* as held by the Melanesians finds its correspondence in the *garenda* (*orenda*) of the Iroquois Indians, the *wakonda* of the Sioux, and the *manitou* of the Algonquins.

*Mana*, in terms of the definition suggested above, is the lowest object sought in religion, and no matter how inferior the conception, as compared with present-day attitudes, it represents the ultimate power for these peoples and is the supreme agency which can aid them in the realization of their desires and in the acquisition of their highest values. This force may be associated with stones, water, ghosts, spirits, objects of any kind. It is not physical; it is more than physical and can be made to transfer its residence from one object to another. In every ceremony the primary aim is to get more of this all-pervading power. Any person of exceptional ability, for instance a very influential chieftain in a tribe, is said to have much *mana*. If an individual is successful in any way whatsoever, the cause is attributed to the possession of this peculiar force; if he fails, it is because there is not a sufficient amount of this power. What we might look upon as the result of cunning, skill, and strength, the Indian and Melanesian would probably say was due to the assistance of this mysterious force. But is he not feeling after facts, as expressed in the attitude of the average religionist to-day? The positive scientist probably would explain this seeming "insurging" and "upsurging" psychologically, but the Christian religionist, in terms of his own experience, would probably go further and explain this response to the outreaching of yearning souls as the "incoming" of the spirit of God. And so, if we

were to substitute "the spirit of God" for the term *mana*, impersonalizing it as much as possible, we should have a situation which in its feeling of dependence, awe, earnestness of approach, satisfaction, etc., has its counterpart in the attitude of the devoted Christian. This is the soil out of which richer and more refined conceptions grow.

As intimated above, there is considerable overlapping of these stages, which will be made clear as we proceed. When a person of refinement and culture to-day, perhaps frowning upon the crude practices of the savage who is on the level of manaism for the most part, puts the horse-shoe over the door to insure good luck, uses "Job's tears" to help the baby cut teeth, taps on wood, puts the young child around the table-leg three times to relieve growing pains, etc., etc., he is but professing and practicing belief in some mysterious something which might aid in the achievement of ends, similar in most respects to the endeavors of the *mana* devotee.

But some one may raise an objection speaking something as follows: "While it seems true the savage believes *mana* is essential to success and thus tries to get as much of it as possible, it cannot be that it means as much to him as a god. He does not pray to it. In other words, he does not personalize it, and therefore his feeling toward it is not freighted with as much meaning as is being indicated in this treatment. If it means so much to him, he would personalize it."

I am not so sure this is to be expected. It is true people do read into objects of devotion and love the best qualities and attributes they know. Consequently we conceive of God as a Person with personal attributes. This is natural for us because a person is the highest creature of which we can conceive. But the savage is a stranger to strong individualistic tendencies; he sees himself as a part of the

group. He thinks and lives altogether on the level of group standards and customs and does not proceed in a personal, reflective way. And so, while not so conscious of himself as a person, being lost in the group, it is not surprising to find him satisfied, more or less, in dealing with an impersonal power. As long as his intelligence is on a low level, he will be satisfied with values that correspond. But as his intelligence advances, his conception of values will change, and also his understanding of the agency by which these ends are realized. Thus it is naturally expected that as the savage grows in his conception of the agency he will transcend the *mana* stage and include in his religious program those beliefs which are indicative of a higher level, —that of animism, etc.

## ANIMISM

Animism is the conception of a world of spiritual things, a belief in the existence of spirit or spirits. It is broader than the simple idea that objects possess souls or spirits similar to men; it also represents a belief in the universal presence of spirits. Spirits thus are believed to inhabit not only the animate world but the inanimate as well. These spiritual powers, possessing the faculty of will, are supposed to reside in all things, rocks, trees, water, mountains, etc., and being either of a benevolent or malevolent character may help or hinder an individual in his efforts at achievement. Animism really assumes a type of personality in things, and in the fact of individualized spirits represents a level higher than manaism.

Animism

In time the spirit may become free from the object which it inhabits and operate independently. This ascribing to the soul or spirit a separate and independent existence is an important step in the move toward an established belief in free, self-active beings which help or hinder the success

of individuals and groups. If sufficiently elaborated upon, this program may finally head up in a regard for the spirits of departed ancestors, or perhaps even gods. Some spirits, because of peculiar circumstances, increase in importance and do eventually become gods.

The origin of the animistic attitude is explained in different ways. It is generally believed that it has originated from within, and yet there are external facts which may have contributed much to the formulation of this belief.

Origin of Animism

Those who believe that it has come from within, base their belief on the fact that primitive man in time became aware of something within himself which was altogether different from his material body, which being material was apparent to the senses, while this inner something defied ordinary perception. The most common experience helping primitive man to this knowledge was the fact of dreams. During dreams he would visit other worlds, talk to departed ancestors, etc., and when telling his friends of his experiences would be assured that his body had remained in one place all the time and had not been away. The most likely inference then was that there was a double, a spirit dwelling within. As man naturally reads into other things his own feelings, interests, qualities, and weaknesses, the savage naturally applied this idea of a double to things about him, attributing to animate and inanimate objects a spiritual quality which culminated in a system of animism. This tendency on the part of man to think of things in terms of his own qualities and attributes has asserted itself greatly in formulating the current conception of God. Xenophanes said that "if oxen and lions had hands and could manipulate them like men, they would have made gods with bodies similar to their own, horses would have framed gods with horses' bodies, and cattle with cattle's. . . . Men think the gods have their feelings, their voice,

and their body." And he was right because religionists have continually followed the practice of making the gods or God in their own image.

On the other hand, it is reasonable to feel that early groups received the suggestion and encouragement to a belief in animism also from what they saw in external things. For instance, they felt something must be responsible for things moving, surely those things which move irregularly and mysteriously. In the face of mysterious facts it was natural to conclude that invisible powers were at work in ways beyond the understanding of human beings, which led to the belief that spirits resided in objects. This attitude finds ready acceptance with him who believes there is an Agency which has operated through the ages and whose desires have found expression in the experiences of the everyday life of primitive men.

While some students begin religion on this level, others may say there is no necessary relation between religion and animism, that is, animism is not identical with religion. When it is said that animism is not religion, it is necessary to ask, What is meant by religion? If this attitude is justifiable, it surely calls for a change in the general idea of religion. If primitive groups came to regard whatever appeared mysterious and significant as being caused by indwelling spirits which were in positions of control and which could assist or defeat them, and tried to open relations with these powers, then animism is religion. Not all animism can be analyzed along these definite lines, but on the whole this holds good. As primitive groups rise to conceptions of higher values they devise new methods for realizing these new ends. And it may be that as they thus move on, the remnant of animism that continues to abide will seem more superstitious than religious, but this does not operate against the belief that animism has been a dis-

tinct stage in the religious development of these groups. In all cases where there seems to be no connection between the animistic beliefs and religion, an explanation can probably be found either in the fact that the groups have moved to higher levels of religious beliefs and practices, or that full information relative to the beliefs of these particular groups has not been obtained.

## TOTEMISM

Totemism is the belief that the group has come from a common ancestor which may be an animal or some object of Nature. If an animal,—buzzard, kangaroo, turtle, eagle, cow, serpent, ram, etc.,—then the blood of this animal runs through every member of the tribe. If the totem is some Nature object,—plant, sun, moon, star,—here also in some mysterious way, not understood by the group itself, the totem is represented in all members of the tribe. The force or power peculiar to a certain totem is acquired and conserved by the individuals of its particular group, because to this totem they have a relation not experienced by any other tribe. Totemism in its bald form is closely associated with Nature worship. In all cases the totem is sacred and in most cases the food of the totemic animal is taboo and will not be eaten except on sacred occasions. Totemism has the following as its chief characteristics: Belief in a common ancestry, that is, descent from the totem; ban against killing and eating the totem; the practice of not marrying within the group. This last feature, however, may not always hold good for totemic aggregations.

Totemism

While totemism is not found among all early peoples, it is so general as to make it seem sure that there is something in the idea which finds natural expression in the psychological make-up of primitive man. The fact that it is

not universal is no argument that it exists apart from religion. It is just one form which the religious tendency takes. As religion, it is usually associated with some other stage of conception of the supernatural powers.

Attitude Toward the Totem

The attitude assumed toward the totem is very interesting—it is responsible for the existence of the group; it must not be killed; and it must not be eaten except on special occasions. For such occasions it becomes sacred food. It is easy to see how in a situation like this all the members feel tied to each other and to the totem. The seen and the unseen are united in one great whole, representing a unity which an outsider cannot fully appreciate. The totem being treated as a supernatural agency makes this a program which is religious, and at the same time furnishes the background for an organization characterized by a remarkable social solidarity.

The custom of representing supernatural helpers in the form of a totem continued until a late day. The change from totemic or animal representation of deities to that place where they are pictured in anthropomorphic or human form is a gradual process. For instance, in the religion of ancient Egypt the tribes had their totems and also their gods, which were distinct from the totems. And yet the gods were still closely associated with the animals and ordinarily were pictured in the forms of totemic animals. Atum was represented by the lion, Bastet by the cat, Hathor by the cow, etc. As the group rises above its simple totemism and thinks of its deities in human terms, the religionists begin to picture the gods as men. But this does not happen all at once. At first the god will likely be represented as half-beast and half-man—perhaps the body of a fish or lion and the head of a man. This is a half-way station between the totemic custom of animal representation of supernatural

agencies (zoömorphism) and genuine anthropomorphism, where the gods are looked upon as men.

The sacrifice of the totem, if an animal, on special occasions has been a common practice. If in the belief of the group the totem has come to be a personality that dwells in the totemic object, whatever it may happen to be, then in this case when the devotee partakes of the sacred food the spirit worshiped seems to be eaten. And yet the spirit or "god" is not really eaten, for it continues to exist after the totemic food has been consumed.

The Aztecs of Mexico

The Aztecs of ancient Mexico provide an interesting study along this line, which if not a pure totemic situation, grew out of totemism. Twice a year they killed their great god and ate his body as a sacrament. A large mass of dough representing the god was broken in pieces and distributed to the people, which they received and ate in awe and reverence, as the flesh and bones of the god. Pieces of this body were carried reverently to those who were unable to be present at this great ceremony. With the ancient Mexicans there also existed the custom of killing a human being, representing a god, whose flesh was cut into pieces and eaten. As the priests consecrated the bread or dough mentioned above it was believed that it turned into the very body of the god, and in eating this the people ate the god's very body. This program of belief and practice is old and was not confined to the ancient Mexicans.[1]

By this time the reader has probably anticipated the suggestion that there is a strain of totemism running through the Christian religion. Christians believe they have a com-

[1] The sacramental killing and eating of the sacred object, the god, was common in the orgiastic ceremonies of the Dionysiac Greek Mystery-cult as early as the sixth century B.C. See articles on "Mysteries" in *The Encyclopædia Britannica* and Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, and also article on "Bacchus" in *The New International Encyclopædia*.

mon ancestry, that in some way all souls have come from God, whether by special creative act or propagated naturally from one generation to another. They believe also that God's likeness is found in all men. In the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper the sacred emblems represent the body and blood of Christ Who, according to His own teaching, was God (John 9: 35-37; Matt. 22: 45). And in the doctrine of transubstantiation as taught by Roman Catholicism, the communicant partakes of the very body and blood of Christ, into which the wafer and the wine have been changed. And so, in saying, "This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. . . . This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you," it may be that Jesus did not teach a new method of worship but revitalized and refined a practice already in existence. As this was a most important ceremony with the Aztecs, so in the Christian religion the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper affords the best means of approach to the Father. Here the Protestant communicant, to say nothing of the Roman Catholic at mass, is joined in mystic union with God in a way not experienced in any other ceremony of worship.

## ANCESTOR WORSHIP

Ancestor Worship

Ancestor worship represents a rather high level of religious development and thus does not appear among the most primitive groups. It is usually associated with some other stage in the developing conception of supernatural powers. While it does not necessarily grow out of totemism, it is easy for totemism to run into ancestor worship because the totem really is an ancestor. This belief has been very common, being especially at home in old Egypt, India, China, Japan, and many groups of minor significance.

All peoples have been somewhat concerned about the problem of life after death, some more so than others. Among ancient nations probably the Egyptians developed the most elaborate program of belief along this line. The idea that the soul would sometime return to the body, coupled with a great regard for ancestors, led the Egyptians to the fine art of embalming, the remarkable success of which is seen in the well-preserved mummies which have been discovered in recent times. The average individual, not just the savage, stands in awe of the great Beyond. Naturally then these early groups, as real pioneers in this field, earnestly worked out their own eschatological doctrines, formulating definite conceptions regarding the experiences and possibilities of the soul as it passed through death into the mysteries of the great Beyond.[2]

Origin of Ancestor Worship

As they pondered on the inexplicable secrets of the world of unseen reality, and being conscious of their own limitations, it was natural for them to feel that friends and loved ones who while living had been able to do much for them, might still be able to render assistance even though having joined the forces of the invisible world. Why should not the interests, power, protection of these departed ancestors live after they have passed on? Why should not relations with loved ones continue after death? Early groups reflected on such questions as these, and while they were not sure as to the power of the dead, it seemed best to them to exploit the seeming possibility of preserving contact with the departed. The ghost of a loved one was thought to be kindly disposed and from him nothing but good was expected, but in case of a stranger or enemy the situation was different. Food

[2] Eschatology is the doctrine which deals with "last or final things,"—death, judgment, man's existence after death, and the final condition of the world. Any speculation concerning "things to come" is covered by this term.

was provided for the dead, and to facilitate the work of the ancestors in aiding the living, the bodies were buried close to the home.

Some ghosts came to be gods, but there is no reason for believing, as some students do, that every deity has evolved from a ghost of some particular person. This position which would make the gods to be but exalted men is called euhemerism after the Cyrenaic, Euhemerus, who claimed that the gods originally were outstanding human beings.

Euhemerism

Ancestor worship is not conducive to progress and a people given over to it will as a rule be a backward-looking people, which of necessity impedes success. China is a fine illustration of this very fact. The great teachers in this outstanding ancestor worshiping country, Confucius and Lao-tse, looked back and not ahead, believing that the golden age for humanity was to be found in the past. Herein lies the secret of China's retarded condition. There is abundant evidence to-day, however, that many in this great country are changing their philosophy at this point and are building for the future.

It would seem that ancestor worship thrives best in a situation which pays close attention to the sacredness of family ties. Buddhism, which had had little regard for family relations, was given a cold reception in China where ancestor worship prevailed, and where Confucianism had put much emphasis on the proper relations between children and parents. In the early days of Japan, say several centuries after the beginning of the Christian era, there was but little respect for the family. The household ties were very loose. Concubinage was just as common and considered just as good as marriage. But with the introduction of Confucianism from China in the 6th Century A.D., there followed a complete reorganization of the family. Closer

relations were built up between the members of this group which continued even after the parents had died. And in this new soil genuine ancestor worship sprang up which would not have been possible under the old régime.

## POLYTHEISM

Polytheism represents a belief in the existence of many gods, all of which receive attention from their devotees. In this system we meet full-fledged gods, greater than mana of manaism, the spirits of animism, the totems of totemism, and any ancestors which might be worshiped. All these religious stages mentioned may be associated with polytheism, and in totemism and ancestor worship the supernatural agencies may in some respects be treated as gods, may be well on their way to become deities, and probably will emerge as deities in polytheism, and yet these forces, spirits, totems, and ancestors, *as such,* are not the superhuman beings which control interests and destinies and which can be approached in a personal way, as in the case of real gods. They do not hear and understand the petitions of worshipers and respond in a rational way. It is probably true the average individual or group feels that the departed ancestors have just as much interest in the living and can be treated in just as personal a way as the gods, and yet their power is not considered to be so great as that of real deities. It may be that in polytheism the gods are susceptible to temptations common to mankind, nevertheless they possess the qualities and powers peculiar to deities. They may eat, drink, sleep, love, quarrel, fight among themselves, and yet hold significant places in the pantheon.

Polytheism

The needs of individuals are many, and it is natural with less intelligent groups to feel there must be many agencies to look after these needs. And with the development of belief in gods there is a tendency to assign to them definite

and different responsibilities. Finding many deities to take care of many needs is an easy matter because previous to this stage there has been belief in spirits and ancestors, many of which now have become gods.

When studying the great religions of the world consideration is given no system which does not reach the level of polytheism. Every so-called religion, with the exception of three, Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism, has had its pantheon, its group of gods, each one with particular functions. It would be in order here to go to the religions of Babylonia and Assyria, India, Greece, Rome, etc., and point out the many gods and goddesses with the particular fields over which they have charge, but these details would possibly prove wearisome. If in polytheism, totemism, or in any other stage an object is used, in which the supernatural helper is supposed to reside, this object is called a fetich; if an image is made of the agency whose aid is invoked this becomes idolatry, in which the worshiper may believe that the agency is actually present in the idol, or is simply represented by it.

## HENOTHEISM AND MONOLATRY

Henotheism is the tendency to ascribe to different gods the qualities, powers, attributes, of the other members of the pantheon, and one by one the different deities in the family are regarded as supreme, which really amounts to a temporary hierarchy. Henotheism then is polytheism plus the significant fact that instead of the deities being limited altogether to certain functions and localities, they may from time to time be in possession of the attributes of any and perhaps all the other gods.[3]

Henotheism

[3] In a lecture on "Semitic Monotheism," April, 1860, Max Müller, a careful student of religion, introduced the term henotheism. Here he had in mind that vague attitude toward the supernatural agency which characterizes man in the very earliest period of religious development;

Monolatry is the worship of one god, but at the same time believing in the existence of other gods. For instance, the early Hebrews when at their best were worshipers of Jehovah only, and yet they believed in the existence of other gods; they felt that the deities of the nations round about were just as real as Jehovah was to them.

Monolatry

In the field of religion there is a current tendency to confuse henotheism and monolatry, and for this reason it seems better to study these two topics together. In fact many students use these two terms interchangeably. If we say, as many do, that henotheism represents belief in just one god although belief in other gods may exist, with no special attention being paid to them, and then define monolatry as per above, we are saying one and the same thing for both definitions. This is a very common practice today, and if it continues, the time will come when one of these two terms will disappear. If this should prove to be the case, there is an important step in the developing conception of God, as represented in our definition of henotheism, for which there will be no name.

he used henotheism in the same general sense in which he used theism. But in a "Lecture on the Vedas," delivered in March, 1865, Müller again used the term, and in an altogether different sense. Here he pointed out the tendency of the suppliant in the religion of the Vedas to look upon each god, for the time being, not as limited but supreme and absolute, which exaltation was not at the expense of the other deities. This is a definite move toward the place where all deities are regarded as different representations of one Godhead. Müller realized that the status of religious belief as found in the Vedas was not simple polytheism and was not monotheism, so he called it kathenotheism. We have then from him two synonymous terms, henotheism and kathenotheism, the latter not being used in recent literature. If kathenotheism had been retained instead of henotheism there probably would be less confusion to-day. It is the later (second) usage of the term which Müller adopted, and which was recommended at the beginning of this section as the most useful definition of henotheism. This position is taken for two reasons: (1) it provides a name for a distinct phenomenon in the development of religious consciousness, which is nameless without it, (2) because as Müller himself says, the originator of a new term ought to have the right to determine its meaning.

If it were possible carefully to observe a polytheistic situation in which every god had its own field and in no way infringed upon the rights of others, it would be seen very soon that this supposedly stable condition would not remain so very long. The many deities, which have emerged from animism, totemism, and ancestor worship, are bound to get in the way of each other. This tendency of the gods to overlap in their functions will show itself even in an isolated situation uninfluenced by the practices of other tribes; and where there is much intermingling—whether of the voluntary, peaceful sort, or caused by war which means moving into new territory as victors or being taken elsewhere as captives, or brought about by intermarriage between members of the different groups which practice exogamy—this makes possible the introduction and acquaintance of new gods and this of necessity accentuates the tendencies of the supernatural helpers to overlap in their functions. Especially is this true if the new gods have functions similar to those already in the pantheon. An illustration of this situation can be seen, for instance, in the religion of early India, where at one time they had five sun-gods,—Mithra, Vishnu, Savitar, Surya, and Pushan.

The religionists are conscious of the confusion resulting from the overlapping of the responsibilities of the deities, and right here a significant move begins. A synthesis of the gods is begun; that is, several are grouped together, and thus we may have two, a triad, or even nine in the group. A god and goddess may be associated together, perhaps with a son, like Osiris, Isis, and Horus in ancient Egypt; or a triad, Anu, Bel, and Ea of Babylonia and Assyria, in charge of the sky, earth, and sea, respectively. Here then the tendency is away from a multiplication and toward an organization of the gods. There are so many different contributing factors in this general movement that it is im-

possible to put one's finger on every one and give it a name. All that can be done is to notice the outstanding steps, which really represent the culmination of many important developments.

As the powers and attributes pass from one deity to another in the synthetic process, there is always the likelihood that the important gods will retain these qualities, and finally the pantheon heads up permanently in some one god who "presides" over the family of supernatural beings. This then becomes a permanent hierarchy. And since there is no name to apply to this distinct historical step in the approach to monotheism, it would be in order to extend the scope of henotheism to include this phenomenon also. But if it were possible to resurrect the term kathenotheism, it would be much better to apply it to the situation as found in the Vedas and reserve henotheism for a permanent hierarchy as found in the religion of the Greeks, or perhaps better in the religion of the Chinese with Shang-ti recognized as supreme. I am conscious of the fact that it is impossible to go to one particular religion and find all these stages and then see them evolve according to the program outlined. Some phenomena may be greatly emphasized in one religion and hold a place of minor significance or even be omitted in another. Then too, there are so many phenomena which are not available as historical facts that some of these stages very often seem to appear as "mutants" in the general process of religious growth.

Above the stage which we have been discussing there is the level where the attributes of all the deities are vested in one god, and while retaining belief in the existence of other gods they are put outside the category of beings to be worshiped. This is a decided step above henotheism, for there all the gods share in the worship of the devotees. This higher level is called monolatry, and it is

Monolatry

the door opening into the highest of all conceptions,—monotheism.

## MONOTHEISM

Monotheism is the belief in, and the worship of, only one God. There are three great monotheistic religions in the world,—Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism.

Monotheism

These three religions, beginning on the shoulders of other great systems, naturally have not passed through the stages discussed in this chapter; the monotheistic conception has characterized all three from their very inception. Judaism, beginning after the Exile, profited by the experience of the early Hebrews, took the messages of the prophets in earnest, and has remained loyal to Jehovah.[4] Christianity, rooting itself in Judaism, began with the teachings of Jesus which were interpreted and formulated into a system of theology by Paul, and greatly influenced by Greek Philosophy, has upheld the doctrine of belief in but one God. Mohammedanism, drawing from Judaism, Christianity, and the paganism of Arabia, has verily shouted to the world that there is no God but Allah.

[4] The term Jehovah is being used in this volume not because it is absolutely correct but rather because it has become well established in common usage and thus has a fuller meaning for the average reader. Yahweh is the correct name of the God of the ancient Hebrews, although usually written Jahweh. The term Jehovah is a hybrid form, coming into use about 1518 A.D. as the result of a mistaken transliteration. As is well known, the Hebrew looked upon the name of his God as too sacred to be pronounced, and so when in his reading he came to this name he would substitute "Adonai" (Lord) in its place. It was a common custom among the Jews to represent the name Jahweh by the four consonants corresponding to the letters Y H W H which were called the tetragrammaton. In order to suggest that Jahweh should not be pronounced, but Adonai used instead, the vowels of the latter term were added to the four consonants. This was simply as a reminder for the person reading the sacred literature and never intended to be pronounced, because it contains the consonants of one word and the vowels of another. But seemingly medieval Christian scholars did not understand this and combining the consonants and vowels of the words Jahweh and Adonai, respectively, produced the hybrid form Jehovah, which has come to be the familiar name for the God of the ancient Hebrews, and is also popular in the Christian religion.

Zoroastrianism, founded by Zoroaster (born 660 B.C.) in Persia, may be considered a practical monotheism, that is, as it left the hands of its founder. In the later doctrines, however, there appeared some of the pre-Zoroastrian beliefs which seemingly could not to be shaken off, and this makes it seem necessary to put a question-mark behind Zoroastrianism as out-and-out monotheism. Then, too, there are those students who say that since Zoroaster taught the existence of *two* independent, eternal spirits, Ahura Mazdah representing good, and Angra Mainyu (Ahriman) evil, he did not teach a monotheism. But if this fact makes it wrong to classify Zoroastrianism as monotheistic, then it must operate in the same way with those Christians who believe in a personal devil.

Zoroastrianism and Monotheism

Probably the first monotheism appearing in the history of the development of religion is that taught by the Old Testament prophets. Some scholars are inclined to see monotheistic teachings in different religions previous to that of the prophets, but their position is hardly justifiable. The religion of Egypt is often referred to in support of this attitude, especially during the reign of Amenophis IV, commonly called Ikhnaton, father-in-law of the famous King Tut, covering the period 1375-1350 B.C. Ikhnaton arbitrarily selected the sun as his god and as king forced upon his people the exclusive worship of this Nature object which he called Aton. It is not at all clear how many other gods were engaging the belief of his subjects while he for these few years was compelling them to worship the sun. Aton as a god must not have been very firmly established in the hearts of the people because soon after Ikhnaton's retirement from the throne his whole religious system fell to pieces. The king was successful in compelling the people to worship just one

Old Egypt and Monotheism

god, and even if he were successful also in getting them to believe in only one god (which he probably did not do) this would not be the type of monotheism which is found in Judaism and Christianity. The monotheism of these religions denotes belief in one personal God, which could not be claimed for Ikhnaton's worship of Aton. It should also be added that the Egyptian hymn written while Amenophis III was on the throne, so often quoted as pointing to the belief that Amon was the only god, is no more monotheistic than similar quotations having to do with Marduk of Babylonia and Assyria, and Indra of India.

The Chinese and Monotheism

Sometimes the Chinese worship of Shang-ti is referred to as monotheistic. If this were true it would give us a very old monotheism, because Shang-ti was worshiped more than two thousand years before Christ. There is good evidence, however, that while the Chinese were worshiping Shang-ti they were paying attention to other deities also.

Xenophanes and Monotheism

In this connection we should also consider the so-called monotheism of Xenophanes (570 B.C.) of Colophon, an Ionian city, and later of Elea, in Southern Italy. His treatment of belief in deity, however, belongs more to philosophy than to religion. He was working chiefly at the problem of reality, the same as other philosophers were doing. Thales had said that in the ultimate analysis of things water was the final reality, Anaximenes called reality air, Empedocles later said there were four final elements,—earth, air, fire, and water,—but with Xenophanes the reality existing back of all things was called God, nothing more than a cosmic substance—a material something. This may be called monism, but hardly monotheism. If Xenophanes had had a clear understanding of what he believed and had fully worked out his program, it probably would have shown itself as a pantheistic system.

But some one may say pantheism is a form of monotheism, which is possibly true, and yet it is necessary to differentiate between the two. Pantheism, which says that God is everything and everything is God, is abstract, vague, impersonal, as compared with monotheism, which emphasizes the personality of God. While the idea of personality may not be included in a brief, formal definition of monotheism, it seems nevertheless to be an essential factor. Anyway, we should hesitate to classify as monotheistic a system like that of Xenophanes which makes its god to be simply a cosmic substance.

**The Old Testament and Monotheism**

As suggested earlier, the first full-fledged monotheism is found in the prophecies of the Old Testament. A definite setting forth of this doctrine is seen in Deuteronomy, and appearing from time to time, reaches its climax in Jeremiah, who not only proclaims Jehovah as the only God, but declares also that all other gods are vanities and delusions.

Deut. 4: 35: "Unto thee it was showed that thou mightest know that Jehovah he is God; there is none else besides him."

Deut. 4: 39: "Jehovah he is God in heaven above and in the earth beneath; there is none else."

Deut. 6: 4: "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

I Kings 8: 60: "That all the people of the earth may know that Jehovah, he is God there is none else."

Isa. 37: 16: "O Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, thou sittest above the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth."

Isa. 43: 10-11: "That ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God

found, neither shall there be after me, I, even I, am Jehovah; and besides me there is no saviour."

Isa. 44: 6: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God."

Isa. 45: 5: "I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God."

Joel 2: 27: "And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am Jehovah your God, and there is none else; and my people shall never be put to shame."

Jer. 10: 14-15: "Every man is become brutish and is without knowledge; every goldsmith is put to shame by his graven image; for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them. They are vanity, a work of delusion: in the time of their visitation they shall perish."

Jer. 14: 22: "Are there any among the vanities of the nations that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Jehovah our God? therefore we will wait for thee: for thou hast made all these things."

## CHRISTIANITY AND GOD

A consideration of the attitude toward God in Christianity calls for a discussion of the place of Christ in the Christian religion, and consequently takes us to the study of a topic as old as Christianity itself. As long as Jesus and those closely associated with him lived, problems having to do with the person of Christ gave little concern. People could get at first hand the idea of Jesus on all matters of interest. Just the same as after Mohammed died, the followers depended on the "Companions of the Prophet" when wanting to know what to believe and do in new situations, and then when no one was left who could authoritatively interpret the word of the Prophet, controversies and divisions began.

The earliest doctrinal controversies in the Christian

Church were Christological, that is, they had to do with the person of Christ. It was not very long after Christ had gone before the question was raised as to who He was. Was He very God? Was He of one substance with the Father? Was He begotten or created? This question of Christ's deity was central in the discussion of the Nicene Council, 325 A.D., at which time it was supposed to have been settled, the Council going on record saying that Christ was one substance with the Father, begotten, not made, who for our salvation came down and was incarnate.

Christological Controversies

Very soon another problem presented itself, just as heavy and serious,—if Christ was God, how did He become man? How could Jesus the Christ be both human and divine? This is the problem of the nature of the incarnation. This was discussed and an explanation attempted at the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D., but the problem was by no means solved to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The Incarnation

Then later another question was raised, namely, What was accomplished in the death of Christ, the Son of God? This is the question of the atonement, and has been given much attention from the eleventh century to the present time. Anselm (1033-1109) propounded a theory which was very widely accepted: Man owes God perfect obedience. Through Adam's sin man became a robber and debtor to God. The wrong done the honor of God was so big that if man had done his best it would have been impossible for him to pay the debt. In this case both God and man were involved. The sin was against the Infinite and man was the transgressor, hence it took a God-man to pay the debt. Death was more than was to be expected from Christ and thus man benefited by the margin of value resulting from this achievement. It

Anselm and the Atonement

was impossible to reward Christ because as the Son of God all things were His. Therefore, Christ's highest satisfaction in the sacrifice was to be found in the fact that He made possible a Brotherhood beyond the clutches of the stranglehold of sin, which is the salvation of mankind. This theory of the atonement, along with the governmental theory which pictures the relation of ruler and subject rather than creditor and debtor, has in mind an effect which was created in the attitude of God.

The moral influence theory of the atonement, unlike those mentioned above, taught that the purpose of Christ's sacrifice was to make a change in the hearts of men. That is, it was the purpose of God that Christ's death should make a great impression on mankind, inspiring love in men's hearts, and thus bring them back to Him. God could have accomplished this in some other way, but this method was best because He willed it thus.

Moral Influence Theory

Another theory, receiving much favor, advocated the view that in sinning man naturally fell into the possession and power of Satan. Man thus needed to be redeemed, and since God is just, it was to be expected that He would deal justly in this matter, even with the devil. So a bargain was made whereby Christ was given as a ransom for the release of humanity from sin. Satan and hell, however, could not command the presence of the Son of God and consequently the devil lost both man and Christ. This is a rather coarse theory and has done very little for the doctrine of the atonement. And yet the old idea of Christ being a ransom for the souls of men, still exists.[5] Through all these controversies the Christian Church officially proclaimed its belief in the deity of Christ and the personality of the Holy Spirit, and from this position the Church in general has not receded.

Ransom Theory

[5] See footnote reference to the word "ransom," this volume, p. 91.

A modern, representative theory of the atonement, as contrasted with the old legalistic doctrines, would be something as follows: Mankind was away from God and the Father wanted His children to return to Him. An atonement was a moral and spiritual necessity and Christ, being conscious that men would not be able to find the way back except through the Son, made the atoning sacrifice; He became the Way. This sacrifice, however, which was spiritual in nature, is not to be interpreted as a substitute for punishment occasioned by sin, thus making Him the object of God's wrath; His was not penal suffering. Christ saw, through the eyes of God, the sin of those needing salvation, and felt this just as it weighed upon the Father's heart; this sin with its consequent misery pressed heavily upon Christ and caused Him to suffer, the degree of suffering being understood by us only as we understand the high degree of His holiness and love, it being natural that the latter should intensify the suffering. Thus weighted down with a consciousness of the world's wrong-doing and its attendant conditions, Christ identified Himself in love with those for whom He was interceding; getting under all their burdens, especially sin, He sought to make them a part of His own life. In this life of self-sacrifice he represented God to men and men to God. He revealed the Father to mankind; He witnessed for God in showing what sin meant to the Father's heart, to the end that His own life should be reproduced in man. At the same time he carried the burden of the world's sin to the Father and in repentant sorrow confessed these sins, thus making man's return to God similar in nature to his original departure. In a real sense, then, Christ became a Mediator between heaven and earth.[6]

A Modern Theory of the Atonement

[6] See *The Nature of the Atonement* by J. M. Campbell. Published in America by The Macmillan Company.

Christianity to-day should be and is too busy to give much time to the old-fashioned hair-splitting arguments which were born in the atmosphere of scholasticism. This does not mean, however, that Christians have outgrown occasion for full belief in the atonement of Christ; simply that it is possible to see the achievement in a light different from that of the old theologians. Many religious leaders, Buddha, Zoroaster, etc., saw well and deep into the heart of Truth, but, tested from the standpoint of what is generally regarded as best in the highest civilizations, it seems that only Jesus has given a complete and full revelation of the perfect Life. The Christian believes that Jesus gave the world a real glimpse of the God-life in the flesh. He fulfilled His mission, which was to reveal the Father and to seek and save that which was lost. In the Christian religion then He is the Saviour of mankind, making it possible for man to be "at-one-ment" with God. In all that may have been accomplished in Christ's death, fundamental is the fact that He opened up the way of salvation, not by appeasing an angry God, nor by giving Himself a ransom for souls, but by *personally* overcoming sin and showing mankind how, with Assistance, to be victorious—through love, sacrifice, and service.

Christianity's conception of God should be in terms of the teachings of Jesus, but this can hardly be said to be the case. Not only has Christian theology been too ready to connect God up with those very attributes and responsibilities which men want to believe He will assume, allowing itself to be blinded too much by council interpretations and traditional attitudes which were by no means formulated in the spirit of Jesus, but it also has taken over bodily from the Old Testament ideas of God which belong to that program of old things which are supposed to have passed away. I am thinking

Christianity's Conception of God

here of the tendency to speak of Him an an angry God, full of vengeance, etc. Much progress, however, is being made to-day toward a better understanding of God's will in the world, but there are individuals of two types who tend to defeat the purpose of God to have Himself better understood,—the *extreme* conservative and the *extreme* liberal. The former goes on the assumption that all truth has been received and has been properly evaluated by the past, which attitude blocks the wheels of progress as they try to roll toward bigger and richer interpretations of the meaning and possibilities of life. The latter in his overanxiousness to uproot the tares destroys much good wheat in the process, which is a wasteful and undependable method in the endeavor to acquire life's best values.

Of these two types probably the former does more than the latter toward giving the world a wrong conception of God and religion. As the result of this attitude there is much religion to-day which is lived in the cold, lifeless atmosphere of controversy, and to this extent Christianity has departed from the teachings of Jesus in which it is very clear that *doing the will of His Father* is more important than creedal declarations and emphases. Formulations of doctrine are valuable when serving their purpose, but when considered as ends, are sure to get in the way of progress. If our understanding of Jesus' conception of His Father's will is correct, God depends less upon champions of the word than He does upon practitioners; less upon defenders of the faith than upon those who are willing and able to give simple object lessons in everyday Christian living. If this program which stresses the art of living together were generally adopted, the so-called "fundamentalism-modernism" problem would vaporize overnight.

**The Conservative vs. the Liberal**

Jesus was continually talking about the Father and from

His teaching it is made very clear that God is a Person whose attitude toward men is similar to that of an earthly father toward his children, minus the weaknesses which may characterize the earthly parent. This idea of a personal relation with God is blurred in the case of a large number of people because they fail to remember that it is impossible for the human mind to apprehend the fullness of Deity. Thus sometimes when individuals seek a full communion with God they are overjoyed by the consciousness of His nearness; closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet. And then again these same individuals may be disappointed in the fact that He seems to be afar off and somewhat abstract. This fact is clearly expressed in the lines of Oliver Wendell Holmes:—

The Twofold Idea of God

> Lord of all being, throned afar,
> Thy glory flames from sun and star;
> Center and soul of every sphere,
> Yet to each loving heart how near!

This double experience, this twofold conception of God, often discourages and confuses persons, so much so that they wonder whether they are on the "right track"; they come to question whether God is the real and definite Being He has been pictured to be. Such experiences as these can be remedied, and possibly avoided, by being alert to the fact that the fullness of God always will be a mighty challenge to the human mind. When we come to give this problem careful thought, what is more natural than this twofold conception of God, if He is immanent and transcendent as He is taught to be? If He is immanent He will seem very near; if He is transcendent He will also seem afar off, and naturally so because He is supposed to be guiding and assisting other individuals, peoples, worlds.

It is natural that God should be conceived of as a Per-

son because a person is the highest type of creature of which man is conscious. Human beings would be expected to project their highest conceptions into the Supreme Being. And yet the conception of an infinite God involves the belief that in the infinitude of the Absolute Being He is much more than a Person. It would be inconsistent to try to limit an infinite Being to the field of personality, or to any particular field for that matter. The Neo-Platonists headed by Plotinus, protested the tendency to predicate particular things of God, saying that to do so was to limit Him. They preferred to say He is not this, He is not that, He is not the other thing. While this may be extreme and probably precludes the possibility of a constructive attitude, yet nevertheless there is wrapped up in this position a fact which is altogether neglected in the *naïve* conception of God. Spinoza, the so-called God-intoxicated man, represented the same idea when picturing his ultimate reality-substance (God) as an infinity of attributes, only two of which are recognized by the human mind,—thought and extension. He would say these two do not exhaust the nature of God because the substance is infinite; there are many other attributes which we do not know. This protest against a circumscribed Agency and this emphasis on infinity accords with what is common and fundamental in Christianity's attitude, although very often overlooked. It has been traditional to make God seemingly a personified Spirit, thus limiting Him to the category of persons, just a large man, but in the conception of the thoughtful Christian, He is more than this. Everything involved in His differentiation from man can be included in the belief that He is Spirit *supra-personalized.* That is, the working conception of Deity in the Christian religion should include the idea that the God whom the individual apprehends is only in part the God which really is; He may be

God as Supra-personal

a Person and at the same time be more than personal,—supra-personal.

God as Absolute Spirit

In the Christian religion God is commonly regarded as an Absolute, not in the sense of totality of being but rather with emphasis upon all-completeness and all-sufficiency, which means in the last analysis, independent of all other existing things. This is not the Absolute represented in the idealism of Hegel where the universe is looked upon as something of an organism, with whole and part relations, and the Absolute Spirit the All, constantly discovering and becoming conscious of Himself. It is always difficult for absolute idealism to escape the bog of pantheism, and Hegel in his treatment of the Absolute is no exception. Ultimately, for him God becomes an impersonal cosmic process. The Absolute of Christianity is more nearly like the Logos of Royce's absolute philosophy, in which the universe is pictured as an organic whole which finds its unity in the Absolute. This makes persons to be parts of a great Self through whom and in whom members of the social universe are related. God is the great Self who is inclusive of all selves. Hegel's system suggests a developing God which means a limited Being, which, whether right or wrong, will not satisfy beings who are forced to recognize their own limitations; man demands something upon which to lean, which is neither limited nor dependent. Human beings may be essential to God, vital factors in carrying out His purposes and yet not necessary to his existence as essential parts of His very nature. The view represented here would regard Him as a supra-personalized Absolute Spirit.[7]

[7] The general properties fundamental in the nature of spirit, as distinguished from matter, are non-space occupying, imponderable, invisible, purposive, creative, moved from within. The last-named attribute was ascribed to the soul by Socrates and Plato in the *Phædrus* and offered as one proof of its immortality.

As long as the capacity of the human mind is so limited it is a foolish person who would feel that by searching he can "find out God." Man can be kept busy in a study simply of the evidence of the activity of this great Agency in the world, to say nothing of the nature of God. Every thoughtful person is made to pause in solemn thought when he faces the fact of purpose which seems to run through the universe. Things seem to be working together for good, despite the negative factors. Thus we talk of a vital principle, a mind, a soul, a cosmic mind or soul, a divine presence, God. Just as the body is an organism with a mind or soul in control, so the universe may be regarded as a great organism with God as its Mind or Soul. There is no part of the body with which the mind is not in touch but it has closest contacts with the most vital organs. So there seems to be nothing in the whole system of created things with which the great Mind or Soul is not related, this fact being responsible for the evidence of ends or purpose in the world; but He seems to have a special connection with the highest and most important division of the universe of things,—man. In fact Jesus taught God's home to be in the hearts of men. This interpretation sees God in a single individual's life, and yet, also elsewhere,—an immanent and a transcendent God.

God as Immanent and Transcendent

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Which do you think is the older, religion or magic? Contrast the mental attitude characteristic of religion with that of magic.
2. Some students have suggested that religion has resulted from the despair of magic. Show how this contradicts the modern conception which gives religion an instinctive basis.

3. Explain *mana* psychologically. (See Wright's *A Student's Philosophy of Religion*, pp. 28, 29.)
4. Suggest several original illustrations of manaism to-day.
5. Compare the conception of *mana* with that of Brahmă in India.
6. Explain the origin of animism.
7. Show how in the growing religious consciousness there comes to be an overlapping of the different conceptions of supernatural agencies such as are found in manaism, animism, etc.
8. Explain how a consciousness of overlapping of the functions of deities starts a synthetic process which results eventually in a definite move toward monotheism.
9. Trace genetically in religious consciousness the changing attitude toward higher powers as seen when animism and ancestor worship naturally culminate in polytheism.
10. Explain and illustrate the zoömorphic representation of deities.
11. Do you find genuine totemism in old Egypt?
12. Distinguish between fetichism and idolatry.
13. Explain the meaning of taboo; show how it may be used in a constructive way.
14. Show how ancestor worship is an obstacle to progress.
15. Is ancestor worship conducive to respect for old people? Compare the attitude of American children toward the aged with that of children in China.

    Psychologize the different attitudes manifested toward the house of worship on the part of Protestant and Roman Catholic children.
16. On the basis of the different stages represented in the foregoing chapter, how would you classify the Hebrews, when at their best, before the Exile? Is there any totemism, idolatry, or polytheism, in the Old Testament?
17. Show how the social, economic, and political situations among early peoples influence the conceptions of deity.
18. Is the conception of deity a good index to the educational and social status of a people?

19. Which do you think is the more practical, the God of Christianity or Brahmă of Brahmanism?
20. Is Christianity ever charged with being polytheistically inclined? Is this criticism justifiable?
21. Show the difference between a view of God arrived at rationalistically and a conception of Deity formulated on the basis of the pragmatic principle. (See discussion of pragmatism in Chapter VI of this volume.)
22. Show how physics and chemistry provide a foundation for a study of God's nature and relation to the universe. (See Rohrbaugh's *Religious Philosophy,* Ch. I in Part I, Chs. I and III in Part II, Ch. II in Part III.)
23. On the basis of a distinction between consciousness and supra-consciousness, what would be the likely difference or differences between personality and supra-personality?
24. Suggest the psychological benefits of the Lord's Supper.
25. Give a consistent theory of atonement.
26. Explain psychologically the effect of Jesus' life upon the world.
27. Name the three great monotheistic religions and explain the soil out of which these monotheisms sprang.

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## CHAPTER IV

## THE NATURE OF RELIGION

It is the simple, everyday fact which is always hardest to define. While it is not difficult to find definitions of religion, to find those which will prove satisfactory in every respect is a different matter. Long lists of definitions are available, affording a variety seemingly sufficient for every person to be able to select one suitable to his ideas. The fact that there are so many definitions of religion tells its own story of differences of opinions as to what religion really is, and there never will be uniformity of representation until there is a more common understanding.

Let us pause here to verify the statement concerning the difficult problem of satisfactorily defining religion, by examining the definitions appearing in two of the very best books on religion published in the last few years,—*The Religious Consciousness,* by J. B. Pratt, and *A Student's Philosophy of Religion,* by W. K. Wright. Professor Pratt says, "Religion is the serious and social attitude of individuals or communities toward the power or powers which they conceive as having ultimate control over their interests and destinies."[1] This is probably as fine a definition as will be found anywhere and yet what Professor Pratt calls the chief merit of the definition, namely, that it defines religion as an "attitude," is to my way of thinking its weakest point. The term "attitude" seems to carry with it the idea of a static, fixed something, while religion is active and dynamic, and the key-word in

Professor Pratt's Definition

[1] Page 2. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

its definition should express this fact. Pratt probably senses this possible criticism because he hurries to explain that "the word 'attitude' shall here be used to cover that *responsive* side of consciousness which is found in such things as attention, interest, expectancy, feeling, tendencies to reaction," etc., contrasting it with "the relatively passive element in sensation, the accepted and recognized." [2] The fact that the word "attitude" must be explained as representing an active state of consciousness makes its use questionable, and yet without this, Pratt's meaning would not be apprehended, because the average reader on his own initiative would hardly read this idea into the term.

Professor Wright's Definition

According to Professor Wright, "Religion is the endeavor to secure the conservation of socially recognized values through specific actions that are believed to evoke some agency different from the ordinary ego of the individual, or from other merely human beings, and that imply a feeling of dependence upon this agency." [3] While the term "endeavor" seems to be better than "attitude," religion surely is more than is represented in this definition. It is with the word "conservation" that fault is first found. This definition seems to say that religion's full purpose would be realized if those things which society pronounces values were to be conserved, this seemingly presupposing that society is acquainted with all values, which is hardly true. The term conservation does not represent the possibility of expansion and growth; it does not allow for exploration in new realms of truth and the acquisition of new values hitherto unknown by the individual or individuals. It is true that elsewhere Professor Wright elab-

[2] Professor Starbuck gets the idea of a dynamic quality into the body of his definition as follows: "Religion consists in one's complete response to That Which has supreme worth or value." *An Introduction to a Science of Religion.* Lectures under the Auspices of the Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture (Oslo).

[3] Page 47. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

orates on what he means by conservation, saying "it includes quantitative increase of the object that is of value . . . it also includes enhancement or intensification of the value." [4] But does conservation mean this, even in the widest sense of the word? If this idea can be read into the term by the reader, then my criticism is withdrawn.

Continuing the study of Wright's definition, the genus is clearly set forth as the "endeavor to secure the conservation of socially recognized values," which could be the genera for morality and education as well. The *differentia*, its essential difference, represents the way the conservation of values is secured,—through a specific and peculiar kind of agency, and the attitude toward this agency is of a definite sort. Here the very heart of religion is to be found in the genus, and the *differentia* simply provides the means by which the purpose of religion is realized. It seems, however, that this *differentia* should be given a more vital connection with the heart and essence of religion. In the natural religions where the values are of a material nature and the conception of the agency not so clear, it may be that this definition is completely applicable. But in the ethical religions the ultimate purpose is not so much to secure the conservation of values by means of some agency, gods, or God, but rather do the individuals seek a better contact with the agency itself, feeling that real values lie in the very relations which they can have with this power or powers. The primary emphasis is not altogether upon *getting* and *having*, but upon *being* and *doing* as well. In essence, *religion seems to be an active yearning, a striving for better contacts with the power or powers upon which individuals feel themselves dependent.* With devotees in the higher religions, Christianity for instance, the contacts which they seek to

The Definition of Religion Represented in This Volume

[4] Page 43. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

establish between themselves and Deity include the idea of *willing* and *sharing* God's purpose. This position would maintain that in this very experience of contact or relation is represented the realization of religious values. Dean Inge, speaking for the Christian religion, takes a similar position: "Religion is the thirst for God, and its satisfaction." [5]

It is taken for granted in this discussion that "socially recognized values" cannot mean those represented in the relations between the individuals and the agency, because if this were true, it would make the genus to be identical with the *differentia*. If such were the case the definition would be somewhat as follows: Religion is the endeavor to conserve socially recognized values which are the values involved in the specific actions which are believed to evoke some agency. Professor J. H. Leuba is no doubt right in believing that the idea of using God is a big factor in the religion of many people, but to say, as Doctor Wright seems to do, that religion is the endeavor to secure the conservation of values by using God would be to turn one's back on the rich content of religious experience as found in the advanced religions.

The definition under consideration will hardly hold good for religious mysticism, which according to Wright is the "endeavor to secure the consciousness of the Agency through which or whom the conservation of socially recognized values is sought. For Christianity and Judaism . . . mysticism is accordingly the cultivation of the consciousness of the presence of God." [6] This statement of mysticism is very acceptable, it being seemingly true that in this sense most religionists are mystics in some degree, but when remembering Wright's definition of religion we are in doubt here as to whether the great

Wright's Definition in the Light of Mysticism

[5] Inge, *Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion*, p. 38. Longmans, Green and Co.

[6] Page 287. By permission of The Macmillan Company.

objective of the mystic is to secure socially recognized values, or the cultivation of the consciousness of the presence of the Agency. It cannot be both and the two cannot be identical, for one really is the genus and the other the *differentia*. It seems that here in his definition of mysticism Wright places the big emphasis on what appears as the *differentia* in his definition of religion, rather than upon the genus. The mystic is very little concerned with socially recognized values, but, instead, for him the richest values are in an unobstructed contact with the Agency, and society in general, of which he is a part, may know and care but little about the values residing here.

Two Kinds of Definition

Logic teaches there are two kinds of definition,—verbal or nominal, and real. A *verbal* definition goes no further than the meaning of a word or name, giving the common usage of the term, and thus is of the dictionary type. A *real* definition, however, goes back of the term and tries to explain the nature of the thing defined. To obtain this adequate type of knowledge it may often be necessary to know how the object is produced, which would take the student in his inquiry to the very source of the thing and probably also require a close study of the history of its development. The brief definitions referred to in the first paragraphs of this chapter, taken apart from the context, are of the *verbal* sort and are intended to do no more than simply furnish points of departure in the study of religion. Of course those acquainted with the works of Professors Pratt and Wright understand full well that they do not stop with these normative definitions but proceed to a careful analysis of religious phenomena. And so, it is the purpose of this chapter to go back of the name into the nature of religion and seek a better knowledge of the concepts, the facts which are represented in the term. In other

words, the aim here is an attempted setting-forth of the significant factors which figure in religious experience.

## (1) INSTINCTS

The instincts will be treated first, not only because they constitute that individualistic factor which affords the natural starting place in the study of the nature of religion, but also because, of all the factors figuring in religious experience, the instincts seem to be most fundamental and play the most critical part. By instincts I mean nothing more nor less than innate tendencies to act in specific, definite ways, without conscious ends in view, which tendencies have not been acquired by, and cannot be uprooted from, the individuals possessing them. Some recent experiments have encouraged belief in the transmission of acquired characters, and if this attitude should become well-established in scientific thought, then instincts may be regarded as inherited tendencies which are in part the resultant of the accumulated wisdom of all ages past, this wisdom having grown out of the constant endeavor of animals to adapt themselves successfully to their environment.

Instincts

It is the general belief on the part of many students that feeling plays a large part in religious experience, some persons of course ascribing to it a bigger place than others. In fact feeling has been so evident, and has been responsible for so much of a negative character, that many loyal religionists have tried hard to reduce its activity to a minimum, and sometimes even to eliminate it altogether. They seem to take for granted that any situation in which emotion is noticeable bespeaks a haphazard, topsy-turvy affair, which attitude in religion is both incorrect and costly. It is very probable that the "heart" has its many "reasons"

Feeling

of which we do not know. In discussing the relation of the emotions to the belief in immortality in *King's College Lectures on Immortality* Dean Caldecott ably supports the position, previously advocated by Spinoza, that law and order are genuinely effective in emotional life. If feeling is so important in religious experience, a consistent program of study cannot afford to ignore it, together with emotion. I do not wish to evade this obligation, but since our immediate problem lies in the field of religion rather than psychology, it would be unwise to allow the chief interests to be swallowed up by a discussion of the theories, technique, etc., of some particular science. And yet it does seem necessary to pause momentarily and try to arrange some of these terms in relation to each other.

In common *parlance,* feelings, emotions, impulses, and instincts, are fish which swim in the same stream. We shall look upon feeling in its complicated phases as emotion, in its simple aspects as affection. But let us begin with that which is most fundamental, the instinct, which is back of emotion, all emotions being due to the great instinctive drives. It is really very difficult to differentiate between instinct and emotion, and if it were possible to subtract from the instinct the characteristic naturally endowed tendency, a significant differentiating factor would be removed. When an instinct arrives in consciousness it becomes an impulse; that is, when we become conscious of an instinctive tendency to action, we have an impulse. And when an inhibition or conflict of impulses is felt in consciousness, emotion results. If this feeling is of a complex character, we call it emotion, if of a simple type, affection. This program, which represents the belief that whenever an instinct is stirred to activity the result has an affective character, in substance puts instincts back of impulses and makes impulses the bases of emotions. The

Instincts, Impulses, Emotions

belief that the activities of the instincts are responsible for emotions is rather common in modern thought, and the position which says an emotion is primarily the consciousness of conflicting or inhibited impulses, originally set forth by Professor Dewey, bids fair to take its place beside other well-established theories.[7]

There are from twelve to fifteen fundamental instincts, such as fear, love, curiosity, acquisition, pugnacity, repulsion, etc. When the number is raised much higher, say to forty or fifty, these so-called instincts are probably but tendencies split off from the instincts proper, such as were mentioned above. These innate tendencies are found in man the same as in the lower animals, but in man they are not so highly developed, due to the fact that man has reason and is thus not as dependent upon instincts. The

Instinct and Reason

statement which is often made that man acts by reason and animals by instinct is misleading, and it is a great mistake to try to draw a sharp line between reason and instinctive tendencies, and say one belongs to man and the other to animals. If the human being should act only by reason, it would be a serious question as to what would become of a child in its early days. Then too, if the ability to profit by experience represents a type of intelligence different from the instinctive faculty, this type of intelligence must be ascribed to many animals, although it may not be dignified by the term reason.

It is a mistake also to put instinctive intelligence on a decidedly low level of importance and significance, as compared with reason, and a superficial study of human experience shows the folly of this attitude. For instance, the lonely traveler in the desert tests the water by offering it to the pony. If the pony drinks, then it is safe, but if

[7] For a more complete statement of this interpretation of the emotions, also for a brief explanation of other important theories, see Gordon's *Esthetics,* Chapter III. Henry Holt and Company (1909).

he sniffs and refuses the water, though thirsty, then the man knows it is poisonous. Illustrations such as these, and there are many, show clearly that there is implanted in animals a valuable type of wisdom which though not on a par with reason, surely calls forth reason's most profound respect and admiration.

### (A) THE INSTINCT OF SELF-REGARD

The problem of self has been given considerable attention in several important religions. It is very common to find a negative attitude assumed toward self, many believing that success is achieved only as man's desires are subdued. Christianity has been concerned with this problem, and down through the years the idea has prevailed that there is supreme virtue in self-abnegation, glory in self-denial and self-sacrifice. And thus history tells the story of some of the most severe trials to which people have subjected themselves in order to gain peace, spiritual victory. Christianity, however, is changing its program of belief as to the proper method of treating the stirrings and outreachings of the self-regarding tendency. The idea is rather prevalent to-day that self-abasement cannot lead to any achievement worth while; it does not denote progress. And so the Christian of the present time does not ask that the desires of self be killed or even suppressed, but rather urges men to desire—to desire right things. The big task then is to give desires the proper direction and control. Here the emphasis is not so much upon self-sacrifice but upon self-expansion and self-realization instead. This attitude is more in line with the idea of service to fellowmen and represents the teaching and practice of Jesus. It was made clear by Jesus that "the Son of man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a

Self's Place in Christianity

ransom for many" (Mark 10: 45).[8] It is possible to practice a sacrificial spirit in such way as to lead to a bigger and better life, but this does not call for a denial of all self's desires, but the *selfish* ones. In other words, self-denial can be wholesome when practiced, not for its own sake, but as looking forward to self-realization—the achievement of a bigger and more complete self.

Self in Buddhism

In Buddhism also there is found a very negative attitude toward self, success being achieved in this program by killing self's desires. It is only as self is overcome and probably annihilated that salvation becomes possible. It is an unfortunate man who is born into the world, because he is nothing but a burden to himself. The climate and hard general-living conditions were responsible for this gloomy view of life which Buddhism borrowed from Brahmanism and which has found expression beyond the bounds of India. It is to this source that the student must go to find the inspiration and encouragement responsible for the formulation of Schopenhauer's pessimistic philosophy.

Universality of Self-feeling

The problem of self-feeling is so general and so big that some students are inclined to believe that the self-regarding tendency, the driving motor in self's desires, is everything. It shows itself in a multitude of ways, in the ordinary giving of gifts and in much so-called philanthropy, which instead of being altruistic shows itself in the final analysis to be genuinely egoistic. So much so that when the situation is fully understood, the keen edge of generous appraisal is lost. Would there be as many gifts given at Christmas and other times if there was not the certainty of reciprocity? When, for instance, the baker offers a thousand loaves for the bread-line, stipulating that

[8] The reader should not make a literal interpretation of the word "ransom" (*λύτρον*) as did some of the early Fathers, at least not until after making an original investigation. See comment on this word (cross-reference) in *The Expositor's Greek Testament.* Hodder & Stoughton.

he be allowed to stamp each loaf with his name, is this charity primarily or the manifestation of the spirit of an overanxious self?

All these facts build themselves around what is being called the self-regarding instinct, which is fundamental not only in certain of life's activities but in religious experience as well, and which can manifest itself for weal or woe. While the position is not maintained here that self's desires should be crushed, there is suggested, however, as a warning, the danger of allowing the desires of self, especially the lower ones, to run rampant—which means a negative initiative and outcome, and all over which must be stamped the negative aspect of self-feeling, selfishness, which gets in the way of progress every time.

Theology through the years has held out a danger signal at this point in its teaching regarding *native depravity*.

**Selfishness and Native Depravity**

But is there anything in the modern scientific attitude that would justify one in respecting in the least this age-long belief? Perhaps so. Even though we could wish the word depravity might be lost from theology's list of terms and the general presentation reorganized, it seems impossible but to believe there is a measure of truth in this doctrine. Putting this thought in language not theological, is there any evidence of the self-regarding instinct being so active and undirected as to be a negative factor in the endeavor to discover and conserve life's best values? The answer must be "yes." "What doth it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" has been a constant warning regarding the selfish tendency in human beings. When this situation prevails the scientific student acknowledges it and talks in terms of the two selves, the higher self and the lower or baser self, etc., but he probably is dealing with the same fact to which the

theologian refers as native depravity. The theologian goes ahead and tries to explain the cause of this negative tendency by way of the Adamic sin, the original sin, while the scientific student contents himself, wisely, without an attempted explanation. So, no matter whether we talk in terms of native depravity occasioned by "Adam's fall" or in terms of the lower self, representing the negative, selfish aspect of the self-regarding instinct, we have the same phenomena in mind.

Evidence of Self-regarding Instinct as Seen in Prayers and Songs

Ever and anon in religious experience there is evidence of the activity of this instinct, and it should be so, thus emerging in the realization of self's higher desires and motives. On the other hand, in customs, songs, and prayers, there is evidence of self-feeling not sufficiently restrained, this seeming to be a very prominent fact. There are those who feel that the Ten Commandments are mostly against self-regard. In petitional prayer, which surely is in order, the activity of the self-regarding instinct very often shows itself in real selfishness, the burden of the petitioner being to get help for self or self's friends, even at the expense of the rights of others. This spirit is also clearly seen in songs such as "When the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there," "That will be glory for me," "Will there be any stars in my crown?" etc. Illustrations of this fact in the general field of religion could be multiplied manyfold.

### (B) THE GREGARIOUS INSTINCT

The Gregarious Instinct

Here the old question easily arises, Which is the unit, the individual or the group? Advocates are to be found on both sides of the question, with an absolute agreement just about as far in the distance as in the case of the traditional query regarding the priority of the hen over the egg, and *vice versa*. Be this as it may,

in this immediate section the important fact is the group, fundamental in which is the gregarious instinct, common among animals as well as men. It is probably true that originally individuals were drawn together in the interest of economy and defense, seeking food, fighting, etc. The fact is now evident, however, that individuals not only need each other but want to be together. Normal men love company and cannot do their best alone; progress in isolation is impossible and inconceivable.

Many students would interpret religion sociologically, believing it to be an outgrowth of social situations. For instance, Professor E. S. Ames, in his *Psychology of Religious Experience,* defines religion as "the consciousness of the highest social values." In this definition "consciousness of social values" is the genus and "highest" the *differentia.* While it may be felt that this position places too much emphasis on the social idea, and as a whole is not sufficiently inclusive, facts are not hard to find which make it seem certain that to the same extent that the group instinct manifests itself in life in general it is found in religion. It is probably true that the group instinct figures more in primitive religions than in others, because in the latter the religionists live more on the individual, reflective level. There is no question but that there is great value in worshiping together, as is seen especially in song and prayer. The negro camp-meeting experience would be altogether impossible without "the assembly of the righteous," in which suggestion and imitation play a leading part. Probably one of the best examples, on a high level, of the point of view represented here, is seen in the Lord's Supper, which, from the standpoint of both its origin and history, is social in its very essence. The term "Holy Communion" indicates a social significance, suggesting a situation in which there is an exchange of values; an experience in which the believer

reaches out beyond his individual self and finds satisfaction as he feels conscious of contacts with other selves and a greater Self. In this sacrament the ultimate aspirations of the Christian are fully realized only as he feels himself, with others, sharing the sufferings of his Saviour.

With the early Hebrews and Greeks the ideal was to be found in a group situation, the one primarily religious, the other political. There is much evidence to-day showing that with many people a complete, satisfactory consummation of religious effort is thought of mostly in connection with the complete group. Out of this attitude have come such songs as "Oh, think of the home over there," "The ninety and nine," "We'll never say good-by in heaven," "Shall we meet beyond the river?" etc. One of the outstanding ideas connected with heaven is that of a home where people will be together.

Some Fruits of the Activity of the Group Instinct

So successfully has the gregarious instinct asserted itself that as the result of its activity have come the church, creed, ritual, and songs. The church organization is not just for economy and convenience; it provides an ideal type of association which is needed in religious life. We help bear one another's burdens. It is an interesting fact, in this connection, that originally the great Christian creeds began with the words, "we believe." Creeds, rituals, songs, are not for individuals, and would not exist to-day had it not been that the desires and needs of the group called them into being.

### (c) THE LOVE INSTINCT

The Love Instinct

It is impossible to separate religion and love, for as love seems to be central in life, so it is in religion. In the less advanced religions the love tendency is not so conspicuous because here the subjects have not become conscious of the presence of a personal agency who is

interested in them and possibly loves them. But as individuals and groups move up into a higher conception of the Agency, a stronger appeal is made to the finer feelings, and the response represents a larger activity of the love instinct. Thus it is in the ethical religions that it is most in evidence, reaching its finest form in Christianity.

Love as Seen in the Christian Religion

While in the Old Testament there is so much of fear and revenge, in the New Testament love is the central theme. The promises and sacrifices of the Old Testament seem to be anticipatory of the great sacrifice, while the pages of the New Testament point back to this. And in the heart of the whole program, as seen through the eyes of the Christian, is John 3:16,—"God so loved the world," etc. Christianity teaches that one should love God, his neighbors, and even his enemies. Without love the individual becomes as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Appeals are often made to fear, duty, etc., but the highest motive to which appeal can be made is love. The progress of Christian experience can be measured by the degree in which the love tendency gets into action. The highest point attainable may be called holiness, saintliness, Christian perfection, but by many it is simply called perfect love.

### (D) THE SEX INSTINCT

The Sex Instinct

In a study of the sex instinct and religion it is easy to find students taking positions at both extremes, some saying there is no relation whatsoever, others believing that sex is a predominant factor in religion. While I would not want to take position with those who make sex everything, it is impossible, however, to shut one's eyes to the fact that some religious beliefs and customs bespeak a type of sex psychosis. The presence of female deities,

associating gods and goddesses together and ascribing to them the ordinary weaknesses characteristic of the flesh, and the practice of celibacy, all these involve the sex idea. In Christianity the ascetic movement was begun in an endeavor to overcome, or perhaps avoid, the worldly tendency which was growing, and celibacy was a part of this general program, its particular interest seeming to be in the victory which is associated with curbing the activity of the sex instinct.

Sex as Seen in Greek and Roman Religions

In the Greek and Roman religions there was the goddess of the hearth, really the hearth fire. In Rome the temple of Vesta, goddess of the hearth, was near the Forum. The attendants entrusted with the care of the sacred fire, which was kept burning all the time, were known as vestal virgins, all bound by a solemn vow to virginity. The religious observances of this temple were of concern to the whole state, and any breach of regular routine was a serious matter, which of course affected all Romans. One of the most vital factors in the successful carrying out of this temple's program was the virginity of the maidens. The emphasis placed upon this is seen in the fact that if a virgin broke her vow there was imposed the awful penalty of being buried alive. Here then there is some vital connection between the sex idea and religious rites; the sex factor is a real part of the religious program.

Among the Hebrews

Hebrew women felt it was a disgrace to die without having brought forth offspring. This idea furnished the background for the awful story of Lot and his two daughters. Then too, there is the case of Jephthah's daughter who was the victim of her father's rash vow. Her only request was that before "this thing be done for me, let me alone two months, that I may go up and

down the mountains, and bewail my virginity."[9] There seemed to be virtue in reproduction, central in which is the sex factor. In the worship of the goddess of the hearth of the Roman religion the attitude toward the sex tendency was negative, with the early Hebrew it was positive, being regarded as the means for the realization of a great end,—the preservation of seed.

Phallicism

The prominence of phallicism (or phallism) in religion speaks for itself. By phallicism is meant the worship of the generative principle in Nature, with emphasis on the organs of the sexes. In its bald form the phallus itself is worshiped, and wherever among savages this type of phallicism prevails, it is always attended by the unrestrained indulgence of sexual passion. Thus there are those who really worship at the shrine of lust. When the rite comes in contact with more intelligent environments which are definite in their disapproval, the tendency is to perform the practices in secret.

Phallicism is represented mostly among the Oriental races, although found elsewhere. During a recent stay at Oneonta, N. Y., it was my privilege to visit the private museum of Mr. W. E. Yager, one of the best present-day authorities on the language and life of the American Indians. Among the many objects in his exceedingly rare collection of Indian relics, he showed me three phallic symbols, two of them found in territory occupied by Mohawks, the other one belonging originally to Algonquins of the Connecticut River; also an old Indian basket decorated with images symbolizing the female counterpart of the phallus. According to Mr. Yager, symbols such as these constitute unquestionable evidence of an attitude of reverence toward the mysteries of life, with particular emphasis on the phallus as a significant factor in the activity

[9] Judges 11:37.

of the generative principle in Nature, all of which bespeaks a genuine background of phallicism.

Christianity itself has not been free from phallicism. In Christian processions of the early centuries it was a common custom for women to carry sensuous symbols. This custom continued in the Abruzzi until fairly recent times. In this the primary purpose was the "gratification of the feminine desire for lovers or for children." "Although the waxen effigies offered for sale represented various members and organs of the body, little trade was done in anything but Phalli. Women were the chief suppliants; and in effect the whole proceeding centered in sexual matters. The ceremonies continued to be performed until the year 1780, when, the attention of the Government having been called to them, they were summarily stopped." [10]

Phallicism in Christianity

It would be impossible to find in the Christian religion of to-day, in its purest forms, the sex instinct showing itself in ways so definite and negative in character. Love is rightfully taking central place. On its most refined levels Christianity seems to confirm the belief that as love grows in importance, sex wanes. Many students, however, feel sure there is some real connection between the activities of the love and sex instincts, be that what it may. If a complete analysis could be made of the most refined type of love, it probably would be found to root itself down into a situation possessing definite sex characteristics.[11] In the sex instinct there are possibilities of real worth, and wisdom asks not that it shall be thwarted and perhaps killed but rather that it be given the proper direction and control, and thus allowed to make its rightful contribution to religious experience.

[10] Hartland, article on "Phallism," Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.* Charles Scribner's Sons.

[11] See *Religious Philosophy,* chapter on "The Attractive Principle."

### (E) THE FEAR INSTINCT

The Fear Instinct

By some people fear is looked upon as the king of instincts. Students estimate its appearance in the child's life from several weeks to several months after birth, and occasionally it will be said that this instinct shows itself within several days. All through life it seems to prove itself an unwelcome and undesirable companion. "I'm afraid" is often in the mind and on the lips of individuals.

Fear in Religion

There is much of fear in religion, asserting itself more among the primitive groups. Ignorance, superstition, and fear always go together. Many intelligent persons, however, hesitate to go contrary to some superstitious ideas. The unenlightened religionist fears evil spirits, gods, which he believes to be subject to passions the same as the human being and likely to do anything that can be prompted by a spirit of anger, jealousy, revenge, etc. So in the worship of hosts of devotees the big impelling factor is fear. A large number of the people of India are demon worshipers. Two facts seem to figure in the occasion for fear in the religious attitude of these religionists. First, there is the consciousness of wrongdoing coupled with belief in some kind of justice, which for many finds expression in a Law of Karma. Second, the gods are not so well known, are undependable, and possessing a superhuman power, are to be feared.

Fear and Human Sacrifice

In the offering of human sacrifices, which has been a rather general practice, fear is a big factor. It may be said by some that in human sacrifice the primary purpose is to offer the best to the gods, but with many groups which have followed this custom it seems very certain that this idea has not played the major rôle, thus supplying the big motive. These people would not offer anything, if they were not afraid to defy the

powers. For instance, when children were laid in the outstretched arms of Moloch, the purpose was to appease him. Parents would not thus commit their children to the flames if they were not afraid not to do it.

It is possible that many of the things feared in the field of religion exist not as realities but as ideas which have been objectified through the activity of the fear instinct. In the highly developed religions fear figures more than is generally realized. In the Christian religion, many people refrain from things which they would like to do, and do things which they do not want to do, because they are afraid to do otherwise—afraid of the here and the hereafter. Of course, Christianity has inherited much of the fear characteristic of the Old Testament. It is a common thing to-day to hear the expression, "a God-fearing person," when trying to pay a tribute to some devoted Christian. How much better it is to be a God-loving person! God is not to be feared so much as to be loved. A person cannot do both in a real way. Perfect love casteth out fear.

It is encouraging to note that fear is becoming less and less conspicuous in the Christian religion while love is receiving more emphasis. But even as yet there is too much negative preaching and teaching, at the expense of a positive gospel, trying to scare people with a presentation of the awfulness of hell, the devil, etc. Several years ago I listened to a series of evangelistic sermons, "hell and damnation" being the central idea in the speaker's message night after night. This may help in some cases, but as a policy it will not do for to-day. An intelligent mind is not good soil in which to plant this kind of seed.

People are afraid of the things which they do not understand, which are often very mysterious. They want to keep from dying because they are afraid; they know so little of the beyond. Thus while ignorance and fear are always associated together, educa-

Education as an Antidote to Fear

tion is the great fear chaser. Improved education is helping people to understand many things better, and as understanding comes it is always followed by the dispelling of fear.

Is the fear instinct then of an absolutely negative character and should it be crushed? To try to practice an affirmative answer to this question would be very unfornate indeed. A great instinct in its bald, raw state may represent serious dangers but if directed into proper channels may result in nothing but good. For instance, when the barbarians from the North overran Rome, and in their presence as victors constituted a gigantic problem for the young Christian Church, they in turn were mastered by the Church, not by a successful attempt to crush the pugnacious instinct so characteristic of these hordes, but rather by being given something worth fighting for,—religion, the chastity of woman, etc.,—and thus among other important results chivalry was born, the direct outcome of a wise guidance and control of the fighting tendency. The pugnacious instinct can show itself in the fist-fight on the street, but society prefers to see it find expression in wholesome competition such as athletic contests, etc., in such cases blending with the play instinct, thus heading up in what might be called the sporting tendency.

In like manner the fear instinct has in itself possibilities of immense value. It seems to be a restraining factor wisely placed in a life of energy, put there for the purpose of helping the individual physiologically and spiritually. It should not be allowed to run rampant nor should there be an attempt to crush it, but instead it should be sublimated, *and if thus refined will flow out in respect, reverence, and awe, all of which are useful elements in religion.*

Fear a Positive Factor When Refined

## (2) THE VOLITIONAL PROCESS

What the individual *wills* to believe and do is a determining factor in the outcome of life, as well as in independent and isolated events. If a person is forced in some action in a direction contrary to the striving of the will he will not realize an "agreeable feeling," a satisfaction, as he would if the experience were in line with his volitional tendency. And so if there is such a conflict in his religious attitude, peace and rest will not be possible until the tendency of the will in the original direction ceases, no matter whether this comes about as the result of the activity of the rationalizing process, or is due simply to the fact that the individual has finally become habituated in the circumstances, the will having spent its force.

The Volitional Process

An individual's religious experience will depend to a great extent on the way the will works. Unless there is the proper effort on the part of this agency there can be no continuity of purpose and endeavor, no stability to religious growth. The volitional process makes its characteristic contribution in bringing about such an organization of mental states as will result in concentration upon particular ends, thus disallowing the entrance of other ideas into the foreground of consciousness. In other words, in volitional activity there is an endeavor to organize mental forces toward a certain, definite type of motor expression.

The Function of Will

The will never works alone as such. Every act of volition, willing, includes a combination of two elements: (1) ideas, which are enlivened by the presence of a (2) dynamic quality; that is, ideas, with which is associated a feeling of realization, not unlike the empathy, the "feeling into" (Einfühlung) of the æsthetic attitude.

The Nature of "Willing"

Also a person *wills* to have and do only those things which have been in consciousness. Thus volition is always influenced by the products of thought, although by no means uninfluenced by the appeal of feelings.

If the attitude of the will is positive or negative toward a thing, it means that this something has been in consciousness before. This does not mean, however, that a person *wills* only those things which reason dictates, because the instinctive feeling tendencies may urge their appeal so strongly and successfully that even though reason should try to prevent, they may win will to their side. Thus it is seen that many people often do things which they know to be wrong. It is even possible for the volitional process to become such a slave to the appetites and passions, having yielded so often and completely, that the rationalizing process affords little or no competition to the appetitive side of life. This individual then is said to lack will-power. It is in the opposite type of situation in religion, as reason relates itself in proper fashion to an act of will, that faith shows itself in a real way. We assume a favorable attitude toward the dependableness of, or, to put it another way, we feelingly believe in, those things which are reasonably true, which is the attitude of faith. Thus when at our best we *will* to believe and have only those things in which we have faith.

The Volitional Process as Affected by Reason and Feelings

This gives the volitional element a significant place in mental attitude. And it is only in a genuine appreciation of this fact that it is possible to understand the meaning of wholesome petitional prayer. Take, for instance, the words, "Thy will be done," as found in the prayer taught by Jesus. It is very common to interpret these as meaning, "Let Jesus have His way with me," or, "Have thine own way, Lord," which is all right as far as it goes, but it is not sufficiently inclusive. It makes the person too much as plastic clay in

the hands of the potter, instead of making him also an active agent, in the situation. When a believer really says "Thy will be done," he means, "Thy will be done *by my will.*" This signifies then not just an act of submission, but a pledge or an enlistment as well.

Will as a Significant Factor in Personality

It seems to be in the volitional realm of life that the *ego* roots itself deeply, will being the determining factor in human personality. And if we are right in ascribing to the volitional process such important responsibilities, then will should be properly exercised, trained to work largely on the basis of reason. Without belittling the large part which feeling plays in the realization of values, it seems justifiable to assert the belief that no religious experience is complete until it has been refined by the rationalizing process. The ego must not say "I will" nor "I won't" too readily. An act of will should be tempered with reason. A too ready "I will" is seen in the wishy-washy attitude of the "backslider," while a too ready "I won't" shows itself in the stubbornness of the ultra-conservative who will not change his beliefs or practices under any circumstances.

### (3) THE RATIONALIZING PROCESS

The Rationalizing Process

Just as there is what might be called a volitional type of religion, lacking rich content and characterized by a large dependence upon self rather than upon a supernatural Agency, so there is what might be called a reasoned type of religion, one in which the rationalizing process is decidedly in the foreground. The purpose here, however, is not so much to emphasize a particular type of religion as to discuss the factors which figure in the average individual's religious experience, which task could not be successfully accomplished if the element of an active reason were overlooked. This seems true despite the

tendency on the part of the nonscientific individual to look askance at reason as a factor which makes a genuine contribution in every well-balanced religious experience and which takes the initiative in the development of religion. Some persons go so far as to believe reason to be a genuinely negative factor in religion, which is a position hard to maintain. Even the scientist who claims to give credence only to facts of experience, established by way of sense data, depends upon the rationalizing process to an extent that he probably would be unwilling to admit.

If Too Active, Reason May Become Negative in Religion

Although reason must be looked upon as a necessary element in a wholesome religious attitude, it is true, nevertheless, that the rational element can become too active and overbalance the situation, thus obstructing real religious progress. This conclusion is forced upon us by the fact that it is so often noticed that with primitive groups religion occupies a central place in the everyday life, but later as they move up to the reflective level, there is a tendency for religion to become secondary in the program of interests and activities.

The Place of Reason in Deism

It seems that the person who gives reason a large place in the study of religion is usually the one who aims to be scientific in his method of study. In the deistic movement which was so strong in the eighteenth century it was contended that religious facts could be scientifically studied, they having their origin in the activity of reason. In taking this decided stand in favor of reason the deists probably went too far because religion seems to root itself in the feelings more than in reason. There are many important facts, not only in religious experience but in other phases of life as well, which are not realized as the result of the activity of the rationalizing process, but spring altogether from the realm of the emotions. After the doing of such acts we say we do not know why we did them; we acted on impulse. This

leads us to feel that any experience will be more satisfactory if it is sanctioned specifically by good reason.

Reason's Contribution

The rationalizing process helps the individual in expanding his religious life by paving the way for new beliefs, principles, and methods, leading to new interests and ideals. Here really are the steps in the building of character. With the primitive groups many customs and standards come into being as the result of the constant effort to facilitate the acquisition of the common necessities of life,—food, shelter, defense. In this endeavor, the rationalizing process is always active, profiting by past experience, seeking to devise new and better ways of achieving these ends. So in the development of the individual's religion, reason continually asserts itself in his expanding program. His progress would be blind and slow without the initiative and direction of reason. This is especially true of the advanced religions in which beliefs get more consideration than does practice, as contrasted with religions of the primitive type.

Reason the Significant Factor in Evaluation

In the rationalizing process of a particular religious experience the raw materials of religious values as found in feelings are organized into consistent relationships, which makes full and genuine evaluation possible. Thus reason is needed, as suggested in the foregoing section on the volitional process, if there is to be complete religious experience, for instinctive feeling tendencies, even though backed by the strongest will, cannot lead to definite realizations of value. The finishing touches of the evaluation process must be supplied by reason.

## (4) THE SOCIALIZING PROCESS

The gregarious instinct has already been treated, it belonging to the group of subjective, individualistic factors, which, to be sure, find expression on the outside. It is in

the activities of this instinct that the socializing process, characteristically objective in nature, naturally roots itself. The individual is continually mingling with his fellows, and as important as the individualistic elements may be in religion, it is almost impossible to overestimate the significance of the influence of the environment. Just as moral consciousness is largely the product of the moral code of the community, so the religious consciousness of an individual is not only susceptible to, but is determined as well by, the religious attitude of the group of which he is a part. The individual supplies the raw materials in the way of instinctive outreachings, but society shapes the forms which these tendencies will take. The socializing agencies are at work in such way as to bend him into conformity to the religious customs of the group. Only a very small portion, if any, of his beliefs, methods of worship, etc., is his own. All these are given to him by society. In nearly every case the environment says whether the person will be a Buddhist, Mohammedan, or a Christian, and if a Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant. Whether one attends mass at five o'clock or morning worship at eleven; whether the relation with the Agency is through some medium, the priest, etc., or is intimate and direct; whether the aim in the service is primarily to praise God or to get help for particular needs; all these are determined for the most part by the environment to which the individual belongs. It is only the exceptional person who in these respects rises above the level of the group.

**The Socializing Process**

There are many agencies playing a part in the socializing process. Enterprises having to do with amusement, among other agencies, might be mentioned. To use a single illustration, the "picture show" becomes a fad in the community. The leadership of the religious forces may assume

a negative attitude and hesitate at first, but finally follows the line of least resistance; the demands of the group are catered to, and eventually the "picture show" becomes a regular part of the religious program, sometimes for good, sometimes otherwise. If the majority in the class happen to favor the unusual, there is a likelihood that in time it will come to be regarded as right and good. There is abundant evidence to show that in a very short time there can be a great change in the conception of religious values to be sought and conserved, due to the socializing process. As a result of the influence of the socializing agencies, the exceptional of to-day, in belief and practice, may become the commonplace of to-morrow.

**Art as a Socializing Agency**

There are those who feel that art is the great instrument by which the human race has climbed to its high estate, it being an important factor in the list of socializing agencies, and having played an important rôle in the development of religion, this being especially true of music. It is a long way from the war dance to the renditions of a modern vested choir, and yet in both there is an idea or ideal that is put into artistic form. The religious attitude finds expression in art, in music for instance, which is transmitted to many people. Fundamental in this is the rhythm which proves to be a great uniting force; and as it proceeds, gathers momentum, and this of course means an intensification of the emotional element in religion, which holds good for all situations, but is particularly true of a good old negro camp-meeting.

As individuals play, fight, sacrifice, and work together they become more closely united, and much of this activity is carried on in the name of religion. It is quite common to give to the gods or God an important place in the successes and failures of these endeavors, this being very true of primitive peoples. They accept victories as from the

gods and believe defeat to be the direct result of the anger or displeasure of the deities. Thus people come to new conceptions as to what the great Agency can and will do, and this leads to different methods of approach to Deity—new types of worship, all of which is very important in the make-up of the religious attitude.

This pertains not only to groups on the primitive level but holds good for the different stages of a growing people. An illustration of this is seen in the Hebrews as they pass through the three stages characteristic of the development of a people,—nomadic, agricultural, and city.

Among the Hebrews

When coming out of Egypt and settling in Palestine the Israelites, while owning allegiance to Jehovah, did not consider Him as native to the land of Canaan; His dwelling-place seemingly was in a mountain in the South, —Sinai or Horeb. He was a God associated with storms, manifesting himself in clouds, smoke, fire, and in his presence "the earth trembled, the heavens also dropped. Yea, the clouds dropped water; the mountains quaked." He was the champion of His "Chosen People" in war, and according to His will they won or lost their battles. Also, it was upon Him that they depended for the care and increase of their flocks. After settling in Palestine, as their population increased, they turned more and more to agriculture and took the fields away from their neighbors, the Canaanites. From the latter they learned how to grow grain and do other work generally associated with an agricultural people. This new departure, however, necessitated their being on good terms with the original gods of the soil, the *baals*, and so they took over the shrines of these deities, usually open-air high places, and set them apart as centers for the worship of Jehovah. This naturally led to confusion, in time the name *baal* being commonly applied to Jehovah (Hos. 2: 16). The agricultural feasts, in which Jehovah was central, finally became important fea-

tures in the religious calendar of the Hebrews. From these new associations their God came to be not only the one who championed them in war and gave protection to their flocks, but also the source of sunshine and rain, and increase in the crops; and as they became established in cities, He also came to be the guardian of their walls. As with the Hebrews, so with all peoples as the centuries come and go; great transformations in religious beliefs and customs take place, due to the socializing process.[12]

## (5) PERCEIVING AGENCIES—ESPECIALLY THE INTIMATE SENSES

In this chapter the activities of the instincts, intellect, and will have been emphasized as factors in religious experience, and society's contribution has been stressed as a significant factor in determining the forms which these experiences will take. There is an important element in this phenomenon, however, which has not been treated as yet. During a particular religious state the subject feels he is in contact with values other than those purely subjective in character, and the problem which must now be considered is represented by the following question: How are these ultimate truths recognized, acquired, appreciated? This as a general question belongs to a field which has provided the battle-ground for many interesting controversies, and trying to answer would be to suggest a theory of knowledge which as such would have to do with the reality and sources of truth. But our particular interest here has to do with the source of truth rather than its validity; we wish to see how these values are realized and appreciated. In this discussion we shall go on the assumption that when speaking in terms of ulti-

Sources of Truth

[12] See the suggestion of the overlapping of the functions of deities, this volume, p. 63.

mate truths, real facts, genuine verities, positive values, we are dealing with the same things.

One school of thought would answer the above question saying that ultimate truths are obtained by means of reason, some going so far as to say that in rational activity itself the highest good is realized. It seems, however, that while the rationalistic method is very useful and essential in the discovery of truth, it is as a rule a cold and mechanical process, too much so to become the avenue of approach to a full understanding and appreciation of the genuine verities of life.

Rationalism

Another group of students, those inclined to positive science, will have little to do with reason as a source of knowledge, and say that sense experience is the only dependable source of truth. This is really the experimental method and depends mostly upon laboratory findings. While being a very worth while method it seems inadequate when trying to deal with positive values, ultimate truths. It is well able to deal with the quantitative aspects of things, but when treating with values we must go deeper than this and get on the inside of facts, if possible, and learn something of their qualitative make-up. Seemingly it would have to be a very materialistic attitude which could be altogether satisfied with the facts obtained by means of the purely empirical method.

Empiricism

So it seems that while both the methods named above may be generally useful in the discovery of facts, they really play but a limited part as far as establishing a relationship with real values is concerned. While the self is reaching out for values why is it necessary to depend on any such intermediary agencies? Is it not reasonable to believe that a person can establish direct contacts with truth? If it is believed that an appreciation of positive values is impossible apart from personal

Intuition

relationships, why may not values as we possess them have direct relations with outside values as possessed by other persons, and with supreme Truth? This attitude represents the possibility of the immediate apprehension of values and may be called intuition, mysticism, insight, illumination, or to use a theological term, revelation. This does not mean that all truth comes this way, but simply suggests a possible method by which *the highest values* may be apprehended.

The Intimate Senses as Basic Factors in Intuition

Some students, however, may object to this belief, saying that it smacks of the spirit which takes delight in riding on the wings of feeling, and that it represents a too liberal indulgence in speculation, adding that there is no scientific basis for assuming such an attitude. Has not the experience of the average student made it seem a mistake to assume that all truths must wait upon a satisfactory scientific analysis for their acceptance? This would seem to be an unfair and unwise attitude. Suppose we were to assume this position regarding such facts as friendship and love? In cases such as these the attempt to intellectualize and describe would mean the undoing and disappearance of the values. But leaving this point as an open question which need not be decided here, are we sure that for the method proposed above there is no genuinely scientific justification? Hardly so, because in our immediate apprehension of values, our senses, especially the intimate senses, are playing a definite part, and it can be truly believed that intuition works on the basis of sense data. This does not mean that all truths which the individual possesses have necessarily come from the outside, because it may be that there are innate facts which are a part of the individual's very being. It seems reasonable to believe that there is such a capital of resources with which every person begins business, which,

interacting with the environment, is eventually productive of a fund of rationalized and capitalized experience, commonly called knowledge. Very early in its existence the human organism gives evidence of possessing a type of intelligence, a certain degree of problem-solving ability, which is brought to bear upon surrounding conditions. This native endowment of potential energy, intelligent in nature, is more active, more vital to successful achievement, than a piece of machinery which, in the same way every time, simply works over the material brought in from the outside; this makes a genuine and essential contribution to, and increasingly permeates, the body of truth which the individual comes to possess. And it is possibly true that as a part of this racial inheritance of incipient intelligence, some evolving concepts, such as God, freedom, immortality, justice, etc., also originally existed, as potentialities, awaiting and needing the stimulus and direction of environmental agencies. This as over against Locke's belief that there is nothing in the intellect which was not first in the senses, making the mind like a piece of white paper, a rubbed-off tablet, upon which impressions have been tabulated through the senses. Our interests at the present time are not so much concerned with this phase of the problem as with the possibility of subjective values having a relationship with outside values through the senses. But by senses we mean more than Locke did, and the average empiricist also, when using the term. Students for a long time talked in terms of the five senses,—seeing, hearing, feeling (touch), tasting, smelling,—but psychology to-day is pointing to the presence and activity of additional senses, such as temperature, equilibrium, pain, kinæsthetic, and organic. The senses may be divided into two groups, seeing and hearing called the higher and defining senses, setting off their objects spatially, and all the rest the lower senses. All define more or

less, and all are also intimate, but seeing at one extreme is the most defining, and the organic at the other extreme is the most intimate. *It is in the latter group, the lower, that we look for those senses which work most intimately, reporting their material immediately to consciousness, and are thus called intimate or immediate senses.* For instance, if we go into a warm room the warmth is immediately perceived, because the impressions picked up by the temperature sense receptors are immediately reported to headquarters for evaluation. Consequently *it is these intimate senses which mean so much in the immediate apprehension of values, the organic and kinæsthetic figuring most largely in the handling of the "material" which is organized into religious and artistic experience.* For years Professor Starbuck has pointed to the significance of the intimate senses as sources of wisdom in art and religion. The position taken here is that by means of these intimate senses truth is immediately apprehended, that these are the avenues through which values move, the means by which "energy flows in," religious values being the only concern in this discussion. This is not altogether different from saying that "our minds and sense organs are genuine functioning parts of the real world." [13] Here then we may see a possible scientific basis for the intuitive activities in which people have always just naturally believed; and if revelation be looked upon as the Supernatural causing Truth to be immediately apprehended, this theological term can also be included in this same category.

Assuming the attitude that genuine values reside in the religious aspects of personal relationships, the question may be raised at this time as to whether the senses, particularly the intimate senses, do figure as conspicuously in religious

[13] Leighton, *The Field of Philosophy*, p. 355. By permission of D. Appleton & Company.

experience as has been suggested. As an answer to this imagined question let us now examine some representative religious data as found in songs, prayers, testimonies, literature, and religious practices. Here probably all the senses will be seen at work, not merely receiving impressions but seemingly trying for satisfactions, reaching out for value contacts. And in the realizations of these outreachings we have the raw material, the bulk of content which later culminates in complete religious experience. It would be possible to arrange abundant evidence here, but only a few illustrations will be presented under each head.

The Activity of the Senses in Religious Experience

1. **Seeing.** "I shall see him face to face." "When by his grace I shall look on his face." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Here are met those who are primarily visual-minded. For them supreme satisfaction seems to be in seeing Jesus.

2. **Hearing.** Such expressions as "the voice of God," "the still, small voice," "angels' voices," "I can hear my Savior calling," "hear, and your soul shall live" (Is. 55: 3), "sounding with trumpets," "with trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the King, Jehovah" (Ps. 98: 6), "Feast of Trumpets" (a blowing commemoration), show a very impressionable sense of hearing.

3. **Feeling** (touch). "The touch of his hand on mine." "For she said within herself, if I do but touch his garment, I shall be made whole." "And they besought him that they might only touch the border of his garment; and as many as touched were made whole." Also, we see the activity of this sense in the general custom of the laying on of hands in ordination ceremonies, the ceremony of anointing, and the kiss of peace.

4. **Taste.** "Taste and see that the Lord is good." The tasting of bread and water at love feasts, and bread and wine at sacramental services. At the old Roman marriage ceremony (which was religious) the bride and groom in the presence of the gods of the family divided a cake of meal between them.

5. **Smell.** The general practice of using flowers at religious services, and often the burning of incense. Some religious cults use sweet smelling fires "pouring on ghi, or liquified butter," which is but an attempt, conscious or unconscious, to satisfy the sense of smell.

6. **Temperature.** "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither hot or cold, I will spue thee out of my mouth." During the conversion experience the heart may become "strangely warmed." When attending worship in which there seems to be no spiritual power we call it a cold service, but if there is fervor and a good spirit we say there is warmth and probably call the group a warm-hearted people.

7. **Pain.** The idea that suffering is pleasing to the gods has been a universal belief. Among inferior people some horrible practices have been observed, making pain the means to divine blessing. Even among Christian people this belief has been common, especially with those who practice the extreme self-denial or self-sacrifice theory.

8. **Equilibrium.** "Uphold me according unto thy word." "He will not let me fall." It is very common to hear people pray for guidance and strength that they may be kept from falling. They do not want to waver, but are anxious to be steady and solid like the rock, unshaken by the storms of life.

9. **Kinæsthetic.** Here the sense receptors are in the striped muscles, and especially in the tendons and joints. Evidences of this sense at work are seen in certain customs during worship, such as clasping the hands, bending the

knees, closing the eyes, and in the old custom of dancing before the Lord. The experience of the man may be quoted here who when happy said, "Brethren, I feel—I feel—I feel—I feel—I feel—I can't tell you how I feel, but, oh, I feel! I feel!"[14] While feeling is probably fundamental in religious experience, it seems true that it was playing too large a part in this case. And yet we cannot question the fact that this man did "feel," and felt something down in his very "bones." Many people in their richest experiences close their eyes and ears to everything and just want to "feel" the values. In dealing with illustrations like these in which extreme feeling is stressed, it is impossible to draw a definite line of distinction between the organic and kinæsthetic. A combination of the kinæsthetic and equilibrium senses is seen in the following from Isaiah: "The everlasting God, Jehovah, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary. . . . He giveth power to the faint; and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait for Jehovah shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." The hearing and kinæsthetic senses are coöperating in the words of the Psalmist: "Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." (Ps. 51: 8.)

10. **Organic, especially hunger and thirst.** Here the sense receptors are in the smooth muscles of the body, such as the stomach, intestines, heart, lungs, veins, etc. Manifestations of the activity of this sense are very numerous: "Bread of Life," "Drinking at the fountain," "Feasting in Beulahland," "Hunger and thirst after righteousness," "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul

[14] Coe, *The Spiritual Life*, p. 215. The Abingdon Press.

after thee, O God," "Break thou the Bread of life dear Lord to me," "Bread of heaven, feed me till I want no more," "My soul is athirst for God." Attention is also called to the practice of associating feasts with religious festivals. On the other hand the custom with many people of fasting before certain religious periods may show a conscious effort to deny the desires of the organic sense.

It seems clear from the foregoing that all the senses figure in religious experience, *the intimate senses, particularly the organic, being the most active and making possible immediate contact with values.*[15] It is an interesting fact that the deepest religious experiences are usually described in terms of organic and kinæsthetic sensations. And just the same as a work of art may be considered first-class when it appeals to a large number of the senses, so a religious experience is richest when the whole group of senses play a part. When we call to mind the incident of the young woman, deaf, dumb, and blind, who, when putting her teeth against the bridge of the violin as it was being played, communicated with deep emotion, "Like the voices of angels!" and remembering also the great progress from conditions of the early days to the present time when a person can sit in his home and enjoy a radio program rendered in London, it dawns upon the thoughtful person that there are potential media of communication of which the most vivid imagination has never dreamed. Facts such as these make it seem necessary to turn our backs upon the old beaten paths of understanding, and, as to the part played by the individual in making and preserving contacts with

[15] This interpretation of the intimate senses is reproduced from my book, *Religious Philosophy.* For a more technical treatment see Professor Starbuck's article, "The Intimate Senses as Sources of Wisdom," *Journal of Religion,* Vol. I, March, 1921. The most elaborate statement along this line appears in Dr. E. L. Mudge's dissertation entitled *Sense-Feeling Complexes Conditioning the God Experience.* Later revised and published under the title, *The God Experience.* The Caxton Press, Cincinnati (1923).

the higher values, to question a dependence upon the ordinary channels of sense, and cast our lot with the activity of the intimate senses, or, with still deeper perceiving agencies not yet discovered, but which in the future may yield to the efforts of scientific research. The position which advocates the reality of contacts with ultimate values and suggests the possibility of the intimate senses being the sources of religious truth, receives definite encouragement from the findings of the English Society for Psychical Research, which as early as 1884 claimed to have proved the reality of transmitting images, thoughts, and feelings from one mind to another by ways other than the ordinary, recognized perceptive processes.

The Function of the Image

But the criticism may be made that religious experiences are transient, one followed by another, and since it has been said that values reside within the religious aspects of human experience, then as far as the individual is concerned values must also be transient and not abiding. As an answer to this anticipated criticism it can be said that it is in a study of the psychology of the function of the image in religious experience that a clew is obtained as to the possible conservation of these positive values. So important is the part played by the image in religious appreciation that it seems the reality of religion would be seriously curtailed without the faculty of imagination; without the function of the image only the religious experience of the present moment, that which is immediately ours, could be enjoyed. We have here the means by which the religious phenomena which we have seen, heard, felt, etc., can be experienced over again. And what holds good for religion in respect to the image will apply to art as well, but it should be remembered that eternal values seem to transcend mere beauty, whose purpose is only to please.

What is meant by image and imagination and what is the specific part which the image seems to play in this program? Here we shall look upon the image as the mental representation of different sensations or experiences, a certain quality of consciousness not directly connected with sensory stimulus; and imagination is the faculty of the mind whose function is image-making. In psychology the term "image" is used to cover all kinds of reproduced experiences, and while it seems inconsistent to use the term in such a general way, we shall follow the rule. When dealing with the sense of sight, it is all right, but it would seem better to use the term impression, rather than image, when dealing with the other senses. Different types of imagery characterize different individuals, according to which of the senses are most active. Some persons experience visual, auditory, taste, motor, etc., images, this being determined by whether they think in terms of what they have seen, heard, felt, etc. This is the reason why different arts and certain religious phenomena, and different representations of the same thing, appeal more to different individuals. The image or impression seems to stand as the intermediary agency between the individual and objective values. It is not an end in itself; it is just a means to realization and conservation. It is the means by which one religious value can be related to other situations, each image becoming something of a seed image lending worth to those experiences which follow.

All images have their source within the realm of experience; that is, all our images seem to partake of the facts which we have experienced. The sensory stimulus may not be present to excite our mind into a consciousness of objects or qualities, and yet this sensory stimulus has been experienced some time in the past and its influence stored away for future reference. In the case of productive

or creative imagination the image is probably the result both of sensation and reflection, the sensation, however, being the occasion for the appearance of the reflection. This is what Locke would call the "outer and inner perception." Although reflection coöperates in the creation of the image, the original stimulus comes from the outside. It seems that in creative imagination the mind simply assembles the images from parts which it has seen, heard, etc., at some previous time. In every perception there is a demand upon the imagination. It is here in this fact that we can see the difference between a realistic and an imaginative piece of work, the latter often proving itself to be a stimulating factor. In art the average mind does not like to have a representation try to tell too much; it prefers to have its imagination challenged.

In the foregoing all the senses have been mentioned as playing their part in the handling of religious phenomena, but the greater stream of meaningful images comes in through the intimate senses. Here immediate contact is established with values and the image becomes the means by which the raw material of values is accumulated and reused from time to time. As has been said, the image or impression is not an end in itself. Religion would probably be dead, as far as the individual is concerned, if its stimulus stopped here, even with the images of the higher senses. Genuine religious appreciation is hardly possible until the "material" has been lifted to the level of judgment, the mass of raw material being determined in a large measure by the instincts. The experiences must have a refining agency which harvests up the meanings and values, and this condition is met in the fact that all images, as well as sensations, in religious and artistic appreciation, move up to the higher centers of the central nervous system for complete satisfaction and evaluation, to

those centers which constitute the throne of the intellect and where reason holds sway. This is to say that the impressions of the different senses, with their resultant activities, converge toward one common meeting place and these different reports are organized as one judgment of value. In other words, for a religious experience to be complete, to reach the peak of value, the impression must be lifted out of subconsciousness and become a part of consciousness. This means that judgment and acceptance precede complete appreciation.[16] It seems to be in some such procedure as this where the factors which figure in religion coöperate harmoniously toward a state of whole-mindedness that the individual comes into the fullest realization of the positive values in human experience. This attitude ties real values to the whole mental life of the person, which is equivalent to saying that the human mind, as a whole, the highest organization of final reality, participates in those relationships which make ultimate truths possible.

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Give an original definition of religion.
2. Criticize the following: "Religion is morality tinged with emotion."
3. What elements should appear in any good definition of religion?
4. Define religion from the standpoint of the instincts.
5. Show how religion is tied up to the whole mental life of an individual.
6. Distinguish between religion and ethics.

[16] The reader must not infer that the parts of this process come in a separate one, two, three, four fashion, because in the whole program of religious experience, as well as in other types of mental activity, Nature has organized a piece of teamwork between the different departments of mental life, the intricacy of which we are altogether unable to unravel.

7. Explain the difference between self-denial and self-realization. Show how self-sacrifice may be conducive to self-expansion. Point out concretely the fruits of a purely self-denial program.
8. Explain psychologically the values resulting from group worship.
9. How do sex and love show themselves in religion?
10. How do you account for so much fear in religion?
11. Show genetically the place of fear in religion, from a primitive situation to a superior form of religion.
12. Are fear and sex more apt to show themselves in a lower or higher type of religion? Explain.
13. Suggest a religious situation in which fear and curiosity combine.
14. Describe a religion that is predominantly rational. Suggest a denominational group representative of this type.
15. Describe a religion that is predominantly emotional, suggesting a denomination whose religion is chiefly of this type.
16. Illustrate and describe a religion that is primarily traditional.
17. Explain religious conservatism and radicalism on the basis of volition.
18. Show how society influences religious beliefs and practices. Estimate how much of a person's religious attitude is the resultant of the religious code of the environment.
19. Is the normal person religious? Explain the seeming lack of religion in some individuals.
20. Is it possible to find a people without religion? Can you have religion without an attitude toward some supernatural power?
21. Describe the mental make-up of an individual who is said to enjoy his religion. Is this always indicative of genuine religious success?
22. Explain the standard methods of establishing contact with truth. Show how each one is valuable but not absolute alone.

23. Is it possible to be as certain of spiritual values as material values? Explain.
24. What would be the effect upon religion if the principles of scientific positivism were applied?
25. Do you think there are real factors at play in mental life which if understood would put hypnotism, mental telepathy, etc., upon an established foundation? Explain.
26. Would you give auto-suggestion any recognition in attempting to explain religious experience?
27. Show how the intimate senses figure largely in the fundamental achievements of life, having to do with love-making, rearing of children, worship, etc.
28. Work out a program showing the contributions of the important factors figuring in religious experience, and characterize the final situation in which each one plays its full part.

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## CHAPTER V

## CONVERSION

In taking up a discussion of conversion we begin an analysis of one of the most interesting and outstanding of all religious experiences. It is the great point of departure for the average person when he attempts to take stock of his religious life. It is very natural in opening up even a brief discussion of such an important topic that there should be some statement as to what is going to be meant by the term. This is especially true because the term conversion is used in so many ways. First of all, it should be kept in mind that the conversion which is being discussed in this chapter is confined altogether to the realm of religious experience. So, not so much with the idea of adding anything new but rather in the interest of a mutual understanding with the reader, it is suggested that conversion represents a complete change in the character of an individual, a change not only in the way of living but also in motives and interests, a moving up from evil to righteousness, accompanied by a new spiritual insight. It is really a readjustment of one's self to God and the world in such a way that there is realized the clear consciousness of rightness with God. In this experience the individual feels sure he is transacting business with forces other than self; he gets help from some Alter.

Definition of Conversion

It is interesting and encouraging to find that the best students in the science of religion to-day believe strongly in conversion as a real fact, and are giving it a central place in the category of important religious phenomena. It seems regrettable, however, that

Status of Conversion

along with the tendency to mechanize religious education, as referred to in the Introduction, there is a strong inclination on the part of some religious leaders to relegate conversion to the background with other so-called worn-out ideas. But if the psychology of religion has found conversion to be a fact, and one so big that it must be faced and treated, then surely it is no time for religious leaders to feel that conversions have gone or should be allowed to go. The student who studies this important transformation carefully, though he has only scientific findings in mind, to say nothing of him who needs and experiences it, is by no means willing to say it is all imagination and the results obtained can be secured just as well in some other way.

In a typical conversion, one in which a genuine change takes place, it is a meaningful journey as the individual goes from the first fluttering in the pre-conversion period on through to the last step which may be called post-conversion. In proceeding, it might be well to point out the steps in the process of conversion. First is the pre-conversion stage which is characterized by a feeling of undoneness, incompleteness, which develops into a restless, painful struggle as the subject tries to free himself from the trammels of sin and seeks a richer and better fellowship with God. Here it is possible to talk of "storm and stress" in terms of Starbuck, the "sick soul" experience in terms of James, or conviction in terms of theology, but in the final analysis each has the same situation in mind. It is here that the struggling heart in agony cries out, "Give me to drink or I perish." Then following this mental or spiritual struggle, there is a surrender of the will and a genuine transformation takes place, making this the real crisis stage. The subject then moves on into the buoyancy of post-conversion, which is char-ac-

Steps in the Conversion Process

terized by a contact with new truths, values, and a definite sense of higher control. He now seems to live in a new world. Having seen as through a glass darkly he now sees clearly. Here the self is organized on a higher level, as it should be, and the "selfish self" is lost in an interest in others.

The Age for Conversion

Spontaneous awakenings as a rule, religious and otherwise, belong more to the adolescent period, from twelve to twenty-four. And so conversion, the greatest of them all, is to be looked upon primarily as an adolescent phenomenon. Most people have been converted in the early years of adolescence, the first six years of this period, the peak for girls coming two or three years before that for boys. This is as it should be expected because females mature several years earlier than males. Based upon seeming facts there is a tendency to-day to lower the estimated age for conversion, due no doubt to improved work in religious education which tends to hurry up the process. This does not mean, however, that the conversion age can be continually lowered. There will be reached a level below which no real conversion is possible. Starbuck long ago pointed out that as the boy or girl moves into adolescence there is a decrease of the sensory element in consciousness and the birth of a new rational insight. This fact seems to be associated with the adolescent's conversion.

The child can do just a small amount of reasoning, enough to make it embarrassing for older friends very often. The fact that the child is not capable of much rationalizing and lives mostly in a world of perception is the reason why he should not be taught very much doctrine. He thinks in terms of sense impressions, particular percepts. If you say ball or bat, to the small child, he most likely will think of his own particular ball or bat, etc. He cannot handle concepts, he cannot put general ideas together and thus can-

not form accurate judgments. Hence not being able to do conceptual thinking he cannot digest very much doctrine until in the adolescent period, which is suggested here as the normal time for conversion. A full religious experience, such as is represented in conversion, would not be possible in childhood, when intellect is not functioning on a high level. A little later, in our psychological description of conversion, another reason will be given as to why this should not be expected of the child. By the time a person has reached the age of from thirty to thirty-five he is well established religiously, he has his religious set, and if he has had no good religious experience by this time the chances are poor that he ever will have.

Let us now proceed to a psychological study of what takes place during conversion. The first step in this approach is a clear understanding of the general field of mental life. It should be known, as far as possible, what it is in the individual's life that is experiencing this great change, in relation to God and the world. This is necessary because there are various terms used to represent that mysterious and all-important something within, which has relations with, understands and appreciates values, and at the same time "grows in grace." I refer to such terms as heart, spirit, soul, mind, ego, self, etc., the use of which leads people to believe these are separate independent units in the individual, all of which are doing business, each one being assigned its particular function or functions.

**What Is It That Is Converted?**

Psychology of course has recognized only one such real,—mind,—but its idea of this mental life, however, is big enough to include all that theology might mean when using these numerous terms. The word "soul" has long since disappeared from psychology's vocabulary, it being superseded, eventually, by the term consciousness which at the

present time has about spent its force. It is not that science necessarily disbelieves in that which was represented by the word soul, but it is rather a case of the need of a different and a more specific terminology. Perhaps it would be much better if theology as a whole would adjust itself to the belief that there is a something within the individual, the very essence of life, call it what we please, and stop with that rather than try to differentiate in a fine way between such terms as mind, soul, and spirit.

The Platonic "Trilogy"

The old Platonic three-fold division of the soul or mind which became well established in psychology (of course modern psychology goes much further than this) will probably prove to be satisfactory in the face of all religious demands. Plato pictures the soul in the form of a charioteer driving two fractious steeds, one a white and the other a black horse. The driver in the chariot is reason, the white horse is will, and the black horse represents the passions or feelings. Reason after much effort finally subdues the unruly steeds, will and passions. Although modern psychology may be talking more about cognition, conation, and affection, it seems that in this old division of the mind into reason or intellect, will, and feelings, there is an analysis which need not be forsaken, each one of the factors named enjoying an active participation in religious experience.

Conversion Determined by Type of Mental Life

This division of mental life helps much in the study of religious phenomena because the type of conversion, as well as religion in general, will be determined largely by whichever one of these factors figures most. If intellect, then the religious experience will be of the cold, abstract type. If will, the individual will live mostly on the moral level and will not have a rich experience. If feeling, the religious experience will be of the emotional type. If in the process of conversion the in-

dividual becomes convinced of the reality and value of the religious life, firmly resolving to apply religious principles in his own life for all they are worth, in this case it would seem that the intellect and will are most active, and the climax of the whole experience may be expressed as follows: "He has accepted Christ." But when the emotional element of mental life has figured most conspicuously in the conversion experience, it may be said of the subject, "He has given his heart to God." If the change, conversion, has to do with the emotions at the expense of the participation of the other departments of mental life, the achievement will surely not be of a permanent character. In a happy conversion all three should work in harmony, each supporting rather than obstructing or infringing upon the rights of the others.

The Place of Feeling and Intellect in Paul's Program

It is by means of some such program as this that it is possible to understand what Paul means in I Corinthians 14: 14 when he says, "For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful." If it is remembered that in situations such as Paul refers to here the emotions are playing the big rôle, then it becomes very certain that by the term spirit Paul means feeling. In the nineteenth verse following he says, "Yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding . . . than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue;" that is, with his spirit (feeling). Paul would not do away with the activity of the feelings because in singing and praying they figure for good, but nevertheless it will be a poor attempt unless the intellect, which he refers to as understanding, does its work in the right way. Here in this general deliverance, it would seem that Paul is contrasting the activity of intellect and feeling, two aspects of one and the same thing,—the whole mental life. So it should be kept in mind that

when speaking of that something which experiences religious values, that something which is changed, converted, reference is being made to just one thing, possessing reasoning, willing, and feeling faculties, no matter whether it be called mind, consciousness, or self. Of course the behaviorist will have nothing to do with this interpretation, and others may insist upon talking about "processes," or perhaps "functions."

**Illustrations of Mental Life**

In line with the endeavor in the preceding paragraphs to pave the way for a psychological explanation of conversion, let us go a little further in the attempt to get as clear an understanding as possible of the general field of mental life. The whole mind of an individual can be represented in many ways. Some liken it to a stream flowing through a meadow picking up all sorts of things, things worth while and débris as well, growing as it wends its way along. Some liken it to a large bottle floating in the water, with the neck above the water line and the bulk of the bottle below the water, the neck representing "consciousness" and the submerged part that larger field of mental life which is called the subconscious. Perhaps the best illustration is that which pictures the mental life of an individual as a floating iceberg with only a tiny peak projecting above the water, this representing "consciousness," and the large bulk beneath the water, the subconscious field.

**The Subconscious**

These illustrations are used primarily in order to emphasize the important consideration which psychology is giving to the subconscious, it being felt that the facts which are held in primary consciousness are but as drops in the ocean compared with the treasures stored in that large, rich field called subconsciousness. Impressions come in, judgments are made, but they soon slip out of direct consciousness to be called up from time to

time from that vast labyrinth which operates as a conserving agency,—the subconscious.

It would be a mistake for one to feel that first-class systematic mental activity characterizes only direct consciousness. Many psychologists believe that real processes of association and discrimination are going on in the subconscious, which is substantiated by satisfactory recent experiments. Probably the reader has had the experience of spending a short time on some problem before going to bed, perhaps leaving it for weeks without any conscious thought, and then when coming to the task again, discovering that his understanding of the problem had improved. All such experiences make it seem certain that real business is being transacted somehow in a region independent of direct consciousness.

There are various attitudes assumed relative to the nature of the subconscious, but no matter what the interpretation may be of this field, it is easy to adjust one's self to a belief in its reality and significance. Here it is being regarded in a general way as the vast subliminal realm of mental life—that which lies below the threshold, the latter being an imaginary line, separating the subconscious from attentive consciousness. This line referred to is not only imaginary but a shifting line as well, because many facts are continually coming into attentive consciousness from the subconscious and *vice versa,* and thus the line continually moves up and down.

This great field lying below the line of direct awareness is making a definite contribution to the cause of the psychology of religion because it helps science in its endeavor to explain many religious phenomena. It is almost as distinct a contribution to the science of religion as when Schleiermacher years ago emphasized feeling as fundamental in religion, thus really opening for science the door to religion for the first time. James has done more than any one else toward

giving the subconscious an established place in the scientific study of religion, he getting his inspiration and encouragement from Myers, the English poet and essayist, who first pointed to the subconscious as a means of explaining much of religious experience.

Neurological Explanation

It is in order at this time to look to the neural mechanism and suggest that probably during the conversion process the self breaks away from the influence of the neural activities gathering about the lower centers of the nervous system, and moves up to the higher levels where ideation and valuation hold sway. When the self has thus forced its way into the region of the higher centers and continually operates on this high plane, this bespeaks an organization of nervous energy of such character that the formerly divided self which has been the victim of cross-currents of impulses, is now able to ride the tide and direct its activities in terms of its saner judgments. In his psychology, Aristotle set forth the belief that man has three kinds of souls: (1) vegetative soul endowed with the faculties of assimilation and propagation, (2) sensitive soul with its powers of appetition and locomotion, and (3) the rational soul, which probably corresponds to the higher faculty of mental life associated with the functioning of the higher neural centers. Aristotle would probably say that during the conversion experience the rational soul as an integral part of the organism, comes to dominate the activities of the individual, and in playing this its natural, normal rôle, does not infringe upon the rights of other parts of mental life. Later in this chapter a possible neurological explanation will be offered aiming to set forth a reasonable ground for the difference between two outstanding types of conversion: namely, sudden and gradual.

With all due respect to any neurological explanation which may be offered in this connection, in attempting a

scientific analysis of the conversion process it seems simpler and better to take as a point of departure the idea of James as set forth in the following quotation: "To say a man is converted means, in these terms, that religious ideas, previously peripheral in his consciousness, now take a central place, and that religious aims form the habitual center of his energy." [1] By the habitual center of energy James means "the hot place in a man's consciousness, the group of ideas to which he devotes himself, and from which he works." [1] There are many groups of ideas or aims figuring in an individual's mental world, some shunted off to the side lines while others seem to occupy the central places, religious ideas being a part of the general program of ideas. At the beginning of the pre-conversion stage these religious ideas begin to move from the periphery or lower centers toward the hot places in consciousness, and thus in this endeavor compete with other ideas, also trying at the same time to unseat the group or groups of aims which have been holding the citadel.

Psychological Explanation

As the religious ideas move in from the periphery and occupy the central places in consciousness, they come to dominate all motives and interests. This is a real transition and the individual becomes a unified, singly-motivated self. A real organization of aims has taken place, and associated with a proper functioning of intellect, will, and feeling, the individual experiences a unification of character. It is something like a team of horses which is being handled by an unskilled teamster. It is only when the right driver, the one naturally fitted to take charge, climbs upon the seat and draws up the reins and unites all the forces in one common purpose and effort that the load begins to move in the proper fashion.

[1] James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 196. By permission of Longmans, Green and Co.

It would seem then that the greatness of the change is determined by the distance which the religious ideas have to travel in reaching the hot places of consciousness. It is in some such system of belief as this that we can find an explanation of the fact that a small child cannot have the same conversion experience as an older person, especially one who has "tasted" the ways of the world. Many persons are embarrassed when in response to challenges and demands they are unable to point out the time and place when and where as children they were converted. There are those with whom the religious ideas or aims probably get far away from the centers of consciousness and then when moving in from the periphery have a long and hard road to travel, thus causing a very great change in life which is easily seen and remembered. But with the child who has been reared in a home with good instruction and example there is not so much likelihood that the religious ideas will get far toward the periphery of consciousness, the fringe of mental or spiritual life, but rather do they continue to gather about and probably always inhabit the hot or central places of consciousness. This is going on the assumption that when the child comes to be a thinking creature he naturally possesses definite ideas, rich assets, which outweigh the liabilities. The individual who thus comes to manhood or womanhood has just as rich religious life as that one who experiences a mighty transformation. With the child what many may *call* conversion is primarily a decision for the better way which represents some activity of the will and often much feeling, and in some cases may represent the climax of a spiritual struggle. But real conversion in the case of a well-instructed and trained child is a process in which the religious ideas, perhaps never away from the "hot spots" of consciousness, become more and more firmly rooted and established in the center

The Child and Conversion

of mental life; this means that finally the child comes into that completer and fuller life which is characteristic of every individual at his very best, the *finale* being similar to that of any other conversion experience. The big difference between a situation like this and the conversion of a person whose mental life has been revolutionized is that in the latter case the religious ideas have had to move a long distance and then adjust themselves in new headquarters, while with the child the religious ideas simply and gradually grow into a harmonious rearrangement of themselves in a home from which they have never wandered away. The child may be conscious of a real experience but he cannot feel the thrill of letting go evil influences and ways, and at the same time feel the inrush of new powers as he might if he had not continued to be sweet and pure. This seems to be the better way. In order to experience the joy and satisfaction associated with being right it is not necessary to know the awfulness of getting lost and finding the right road again. No person must be a prodigal in order to understand and appreciate fellowship with God and be conscious of saving grace; it is better to stay on the right road. This is what a good program of religious education will try to do for children, but until a hundred per cent. progress is realized, the older conception and method of religious conversion will need to be emphasized in an earnest way.

The question may arise at this time as to what causes these religious ideas to begin to move away from the periphery toward the center. Science may explain by saying it is the result of reason and the effort of will to do reason's bidding. Philosophy may suggest that it is due to the pull of the great Spirit. Theology may say it is simply God appealing to the best that is in man, he being made in the image of God. Possibly and probably all are right; it seems

to be in a combination of these that a satisfactory explanation can be obtained.

As intimated above, it is assumed here that the normal man has religious ideas, the same as other ideas, that a person is but natural when religious; he is made that way. This being true, there is no wonder that in the pre-conversion stage when the religious ideas are in the periphery there is a general feeling of depression, storm and stress, divided self, conviction, the last named being occasioned particularly by a sense of guilt.

Religious Conversion vs. Moral Reformation

Religious conversion then, and that is what we are dealing with in a study of religious experience, represents a genuine transformation, involving the whole mental life,—intellect, will, feeling,—and not just one department such as will. It is common when impressed with the belief that there is nothing good but a good will, to confuse a real religious conversion with a moral transformation in which the will figures largely. Professor Pratt in his splendid work *The Religious Consciousness* hardly makes the proper differentiation and thus might lead the reader to understand that by conversion he means mere reformation. In the footnote [2] which Pratt quotes approvingly, the candidate for conversion left the service a converted man without having had anything to do with God, "not once asking God to help him," not even allowing God to enter his life. Here Pratt is emphasizing effort of will as a factor in conversion as over against surrender of will and probably goes further than he really intends to do. According to Pratt, this subject by sheer will power brought about a limited change that evening when he was supposed to be converted. His experience was not religious and would not fit into Pratt's definition of religion

[2] Page 157.

which calls for an attitude toward the Determiner of Destiny. It is all right to give will a big place but it is wrong to overload it with responsibility, just as much so as to give feeling too large a place, although feeling should figure much because it enriches the content of the experience, but unrestrained, becomes too prominent and leads to fanaticism.

Can a Conversion Experience Be Repeated?

Conversion being represented as a very significant religious awakening, most often adolescent, the question is often raised as to whether it is possible to have more than one such experience. Can it happen again? In other words, do the religious ideas remain permanently in the habitual center of personal energy, the central place of consciousness? Some would answer this question in the affirmative, others in the negative.

There are those who feel that what is called conversion by many people is just one of many such experiences which come to the individual. If this attitude were to be maintained absolutely it would preclude the reality of a genuine conversion which denotes the completion of a distinct and real experience. While this belief may be true in part it can hardly be satisfactorily supported in the face of the fact that so many people feel sure there is something very real about "getting through." It may be that the event called conversion is similar to other awakenings, but it is perhaps the greatest of its kind, and it itself probably can be repeated if such need should be occasioned by disintegration. Without attempting to speak *ex cathedra,* it seems reasonable to believe, according to abundant evidence, that while no one can experience over again that characteristic change which takes place in adolescence, this "grace," "assurance" of rightness with God can be lost and re-experienced, something the same as a man who is well estab-

lished in business can "break up" and finally after wise effort "get on his feet again." The religious ideas can be crowded from the hot places in consciousness but nevertheless it is surely possible for them to regain the former place of preëminence.

Another interesting question in the general discussion of conversion is whether the process is primarily a struggling away from sin or a striving toward righteousness. That is, as religious ideas begin to stir, which is the predominant factor, a struggle from the clutches of a situation that enslaves or a reaching after a positive ideal? There are able advocates on both sides of this question. Starbuck and James take the position that conversion "is a process of struggling away from sin rather than a striving towards righteousness," [3] while Pratt in his *Religious Consciousness* argues that the struggle toward a positive ideal takes precedence. In defending his position Pratt suggests that Starbuck's attitude has been unduly influenced by results which have their sources in conversions determined by theological prepossessions—situations in which the persons converted had been taught to expect an overwhelming sense of sin. If Pratt is right in assuming that evangelical theology has played too big a rôle in the answers to Starbuck's questionnaires, thus making the findings not sufficiently representative, then he has good foundation for his argument. But is there as much difference between the ordinary interpretations of theology relative to conversions and the conclusions of an impartial psychology of religion as Pratt assumes in his chapter on conversion? There is no doubt that one's experiences in religion, as well as elsewhere, are in a large

**Is the Struggle Primarily Away From Sin or Toward Righteousness?**

[3] Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion,* p. 64. By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.
James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 209. By permission of Longmans, Green and Co.

measure determined by what he has been taught to expect, but at the same time it is easily possible to overemphasize the idea of theological preconceptions, to such an extent as to make the whole body of experience to be determined altogether by teachings, and thus make influencing factors to be bigger than the fact itself. It is when Pratt appeals to the conversions in Begbie's *Twice Born Men,* in trying to substantiate his position that conversion is primarily a striving toward a positive ideal, that he is far from convincing. It is very difficult to believe that such characters as are found in Begbie's book are more interested in being righteous than they are in getting away from the degradation and misery of the old life.

It would seem to be true, that both groups, as represented by Starbuck and Pratt, have made a mistake in trying to give an unqualified answer to this question. It would be hard to defend the position which says that the big thing in the mind of the "down-and-outer" is a desire to be righteous, just as it is difficult to believe with Starbuck and James, in the case of the individual who has not been so wayward, that the big struggle is to get away from sin rather than to reach a positive ideal. Is not the answer to this question a variable one, depending upon the individual or individuals who are seeking the conversion experience? That one who has been drenched in wretchedness will be most anxious to get away from sin, while the person who has not thus sown wild oats will be concerned chiefly with being righteous. This position makes the phenomena in hand, the persons to be converted, the determining issue, and is a compromise between the two positions represented above.

## SUDDEN AND GRADUAL CONVERSION

It is unfortunate but true that in the study of conversion the sudden type has had a distinct monopoly of interest,

perhaps because it has been generally felt that for a conversion to be genuine it must be instantaneous in nature. That is, only those experiences which have been attended by big emotional upheavals, characteristically cataclysmic, have been considered as real conversions. Consequently it has been very general for people to seek this kind of experience. It seems clear to many to-day, however, that a person can be just as genuinely converted gradually as suddenly.

A psychological explanation of the difference between these two types of conversion is found in the belief that the individual representing the sudden kind has a large subconscious field in which an active association of feelings is going on all the time, of which the individual and friends are not at all conscious. The conversion is not so much a sudden event as that the visible part of it is suddenly accomplished. Just as when the blossoms seem suddenly to burst forth on the fruit tree, it would not be right to say that this is a fact sudden and standing alone to itself. All through the winter and spring there were underlying principles at work getting ready for the time when the tree should burst forth into flower. This psychology of sudden conversion accords with the attitude of James, and is also supported by Starbuck and Coe. "What makes the difference between a sudden and a gradual convert is not necessarily the presence of divine miracle in the case of one and something less divine in that of the other, but rather a simple psychological peculiarity, the fact, namely, that in the recipient of the more instantaneous grace we have one of those subjects who are in possession of a large region in which mental work can go on subliminally, and from which invasive experiences, abruptly upsetting the equilibrium of the primary consciousness, may

These Two Types Psychologically Differentiated

come."[4] This is not different from Starbuck's opinion—which probably influenced James—that "spontaneous awakenings are, in short, the fructification of that which has been ripening within the subliminal consciousness."[5]

Paul's conversion may be used here as an illustration. It is natural that there should have been the sudden and spectacular transformation in this case. The doings of Christ and his followers were not confined to a corner, and a person of Paul's intelligence and experience would be expected to know and be concerned with the unusual claims and activities of this new group. The impressions made upon Paul at the martyrdom of Stephen, and probably on other occasions, would be deep and lasting; these impressions would find a definite and permanent place in his subconscious. While all his beliefs and training led him into an antagonistic attitude toward this "new wine," "unconsciously" the new truths were taking root in his mental life, and down deep in his subconscious, feelings were beginning to bestir themselves and muster their forces for a grand attack upon the citadel of consciousness. And so, as he was on his way to Damascus, there was a subliminal uprush of such proportions as to overcome his strong inhibitions, and upsetting the equilibrium of primary consciousness, the new ideas moved into the center of his spiritual being, thus dominating his whole self. Like the house which has been gradually undermined by a rushing stream, when the last support gives way, the building crashes. So it was with Paul. He *willed* to live in the old Judaistic house, and determined to turn back the Gospel stream, but the latter had gradually eaten its way into his mental life and when the last thread of the old self gave

Paul's Conversion

[4] James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 237. By permission of Longmans, Green and Co.

[5] Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 108. By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

way he suddenly experienced a great transformation. The whole organism, reacting to a spirit of hatred and arrogance in relation to the Christian movement, and impelled by an indomitable will, was organized in a definite direction; a reversal of form would naturally mean an upheaval, just the same as in the case of an automobile in motion, if the gear is shifted into reverse something serious must happen, the greater the speed the greater the catastrophe. This experience shook Paul to his very foundations, affecting him physiologically, and to such an extent that it took him days to become himself again. In fact the change was so great that he retired to the Arabian desert to adjust himself to the new order of things which had come to prevail in his life. In this experience Paul saw Jesus and heard the Voice to which hitherto he had refused to listen; Christ became the central idea in his life. And with a new set of ideas, diametrically opposed to the old, moving in from the periphery to the center of consciousness, dominating his whole mental life, Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Christian.

In an instantaneous awakening, feeling plays much the largest part, while a gradual conversion is predominantly volitional, based, more or less, upon a rational procedure. In the latter the individual builds up bit by bit his new program of interests and ideals. In both cases the subjects have arrived at a definite religious goal, one method being just as good as the other. Those traveling by the faster route have no occasion to frown upon those whose nature demands another system of technique, and *vice versa*. The arrival is the chief point of interest and there is much evidence to show that both ways, sudden and gradual, lead to a full conversion experience.

The matter of sudden and gradual conversion, as well

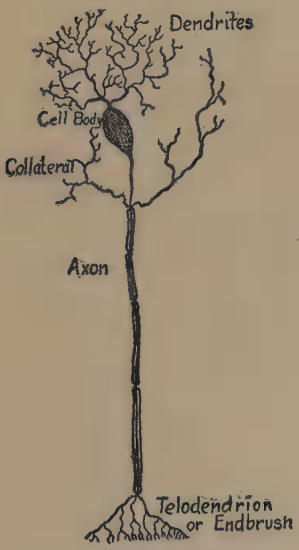
as certain other different types of religious experience, may find a further explanation in facts having to do with a person's neural mechanism. First, it should be said there are two types of creative mind, the intuitive and the reflective, the former being alert, quick, much of its work being unconsciously done; the latter being slow, logical, patient, with much of its work accomplished in primary consciousness. These two types of mind are fundamental in determining the individual's variety of religious experiences, and the causes for these different sorts of mental make-up may be neurologically explained.

Sudden and Gradual Conversion Neurologically Explained

When coming to a consideration of the nervous system it is found that as science tends to reduce its phenomena to ultimate particles and talks in terms of the cell as the unit of the body of the organism, the red and white blood cells or corpuscles, the electrons of physical reality, so the nervous system is said to be made up of a countless number of small units called neurones. In the organization of these single nerve cells is to be found the basis of all hereditary potentialities; also there could be no such thing as intellectual activity, emotion, mental experience of any kind, as happens under the present régime, apart from the inter-relationship of these neurones. Religious experience and conduct of any kind must look to the functioning of the nervous system for their foundation. The unfolding of character, the growth of personality, the development of religious conceptions, all are associated with the complex organization of these neural units.

The neurone is made up of a cell-body and two kinds of branches,—the *axon,* which is a slender thread, inches, and often feet in length, which at its end spreads out in many fine fibrils called *end-brushes;* then on the opposite end of the cell-body are short branches resembling a tree

and called *dendrites*. In addition to this the *axon* itself usually sends out branches called *collaterals*. Generally speaking, the *end-brushes* of the *axon* of one neurone dovetail into the *dendrites* of another nerve cell (neurone), this junction being called the *synapse;* and thus the cells of the




The Neurone and its Parts

Redrawn from Figure 4 in Warren's *Elements of Human Psychology*, p. 21. By permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

nervous system are tied together, affording nervous impulses the means of passing from one nerve cell to another. Impressions are picked up, transmitted to the higher centers, and then find expression in the effectors. The *dendrites* do not both receive and send messages; they are always on the receiving end. Thus the nervous impulse travels across the *synapse* from *end-brushes* to *dendrites*, along the *axon* to some other *dendrites* by way of the *synapse*.

Different kinds of *synapses* would naturally be expected; that is, the *end-brushes* and *dendrites* intermesh in varying ways, affording in some cases good contact between neurones, in others, very poor. At the best the movement of a nerve current across a *synapse* is not as smooth as along the slender thread called the *axon;* there is greater possible resistance at the *synapse* to the progress of a communication. In some cases the transmissive faculty of the *synapse* is so poor that the nerve current may not get across at all, and when meeting with such resistance the message may stop and the nervous energy become lost; or, it may find an outlet through the side branches of the *axon,* called *collaterals,* and thus find its way into some other series of *dendrites* and neurones. This is possible because one neurone has contacts with many other nerve cells by means of numerous fibrils, and thus may receive currents from a large number of neurones. These facts explain the difficulty associated with trying to do things in a new way, it being necessary to send the nerve currents over new routes. Also there may be found here a partial explanation at least of the agreeable feeling which comes under certain circumstances. If we imagine a series of neurones tied together in functional contact, then when the current is handled by the customary *synapses* which are ready to respond, the psychic state associated with this is agreeable; but when the series of neurones accustomed to transmitting the impulse are prevented from doing so, or if a new series is called into action, the psychic state resulting therefrom is disagreeable.

Referring back to the two types of creative mind, it would seem that the person whose *end-brushes* and *dendrites* intermesh in characteristically good fashion, thus making tight contacts at the *synapses,* will naturally be quick, dynamic, impulsive, intuitive, the neural mechanism

making possible the unconscious accomplishment of much real work; while the person whose *synapses* are such as to offer serious resistance to the transmission of nervous energy, thus forcing it to find an outlet in some other and newer way, perhaps through the *collaterals,* represents the slow, more unresponsive, reflective type of individual. In the latter case, the impulses are organized in a more "round about" way, but the final results may be just as satisfactory; in fact, this person may know a little better how and why he has "arrived." In the case of the person of whom it is characteristic for the nervous impulses to be checked at the *synapses,* and which are seldom able to find an outlet through the *collaterals,* and for all intents and purposes are lost, dullness and stupidity are bound to result, not only as having to do with the acquisition and appreciation of religious values, but in life as a whole. These neural conditions seem to be determining factors in the make-up of mental life; they, together with the effects of certain glandular secretions, seeming to have a particular relationship with the affective side of an individual's personality. These things being true, it is here we must look in a large measure for the facts which determine and regulate religious experience, and for a partial reason why the movement into the fuller and completer life, called conversion, is seemingly instantaneous with some persons, and with others, gradual in character. This does not mean that in these neural activities the real and complete values of the conversion phenomenon are realized, but instead simply suggests the scientific possibility that in the neural mechanism are to be found factors which operate as *conditioning elements* in this outstanding awakening, and which in this same way may figure considerably in an analysis of the individual's general religious experience. This position easily harmonizes with a monistic attitude which says that

in the last analysis mind and body resolve themselves into a common element which is psychical, or physical, in nature.

## VOLITIONAL AND SELF-SURRENDER TYPES

The terms used in referring to these two kinds of conversion are for the most part self-explanatory. In the volitional type the individual tries to *will* his way through. There is a conscious effort to realize the spiritual insight, the values, in a certain way and perhaps immediately. It is felt that these values just must come in the subject's own time and way, probably without giving up other desired contacts. The self-surrender type of conversion, on the other hand, is exactly the opposite of the volitional; here the will is surrendered. Inhibitions are broken down and values flow in, not so much because the subject has sought and found them in the sense that he has made a sally into near territory and come back a victor, but rather in the sense that he has removed barriers so that "divine" energy can come in, and enliven the endowment of values which is already there.

It is wrong, however, to say that every conversion is either of the volitional or self-surrender type altogether, because the individual in whom volition figures strongest will at the last surrender himself completely, this being necessary before he can come into a full experience. The higher ideas which in conversion come to dominate the individual's life may be thwarted by the efforts of the personal will and in such a case the thing absolutely necessary is the subordination of this will to a higher control. It is probably true that in many conversions by far the greatest step on the part of the subject is the surrender of a stubborn will. Starbuck says that "the exercise of the personal will is an emphasis in terms of the imperfect self." [6] There

[6] Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 116. By permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

comes a time when the will must simply leave things alone. "When the new center of personal energy has been subconsciously incubated so long as to be just ready to open into flower, 'hands off' is the only word for us, it must burst forth unaided." [7] It seems that the subject can carry his burden only so far and when becoming conscious of this fact looks to other powers for help, and in all cases where he does his part, is not disappointed. There is so much of real value in life, of a transcending nature, over which *one does not have control* and yet which benefits a person directly, that it is reasonable to feel that in seeking the conversion experience the individual cannot expect these higher values to be adjusted to himself but rather must he conform to their demands.

These Types Illustrated

A good illustration of volitional and self-surrender conversion is found in the common experience of the average person who has forgotten some word or idea and then tries hard to recall it, but to no avail. Finally after relaxing, the sought-for word is gently delivered up. In such cases as this where conscious effort, the intellect and will coöperating, cannot succeed, it is necessary for will to step aside, and then other agencies—subjective or objective, possibly both—seem easily to bring about the desired result.

## HOLINESS

Representing conversion as effecting an organization of impulses, ideas, interests around religious objects in such way as to bring about a unification of personality does not mean that further spiritual progress is impossible, nor should a person take for granted, as suggested earlier in this chapter, that in conversion he is "fixed up" religiously for all time, because disintegration of character is always possible.

[7] James, *Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 210. By permission of Longmans, Green and Co.

Very often it is so much harder to hold a fort than to take it. This is true of those conversions which are primarily emotional and which leave the individual with very little that is really valuable after the excitement associated with the experience has spent its force. But in the case of the person who is genuinely converted and determines to make further progress, the possibility of such expansion involving a more delicate organization of the elements of character must be looked upon without question as a reality. Theology has made much over this possible larger spiritual attainment, and has talked in terms of the second blessing, Christian perfection, sanctification, perfect love, saintliness, holiness. It is a discouraging fact, however, that in many cases those who have had most to say about their success along this line—and some persons claim that they have reached the place where they do not and even cannot sin—are the ones that least exemplify such advanced religious claims; among the unassuming there usually will be found the best examples of uninterrupted "growth in grace."

In conversion there is simply the laying of the foundation for a greater achievement which is to come later on, and the *fructification* of the harmonious arrangement of the elements of mental life which characterizes conversion is the *finale* for which the conversion experience is intended. And this *finale* is not to be regarded as a single, final attainment but rather as a continual improvement in the apprehension and appreciation of religious values. It is reasonable to believe that as a person's life becomes built around the religious tendency in human nature, religiously speaking, this person is in a position to do an increasingly better and bigger volume of business. This is true in every other sphere of life. A man may pass his State bar examinations, be licensed for a certain type of work, begin his vocation as a teacher, etc., etc., and all that has

Meaning of Holiness

gone before has been foundational; it has been but the priming of his natural ability, which has resulted in a readiness for work, *and this training must now bear fruit.* And so in some such fashion as the religious ideas move into the central spot of consciousness, dominating the chief places at the higher centers of the nervous system, and as the whole neural mechanism is keyed up in tune with the spiritual energy at headquarters, this arrangement tends to become more and more the order of the day, and this harmony within is bound to find pleasing expression without. The result will be a definite, positive correspondence between the desires and efforts of the individual on the one hand, and the highest socially recognized values on the other, which situation with its characteristic mental accompaniment, namely, a consciousness of completely agreeable relationships, significant in which is the consciousness of sharing the Divine purpose, is what is meant by holiness in this discussion. With conversion new nerve paths are opened up, different series of neurones are called into action for handling the energy stimulated by religious impressions, and thus these new channels become deeper and deeper, until finally negative suggestions become repulsive to the mental life of the individual. This could not be said to be the case in the situation represented by simple conversion; at that time the person needed to be shielded, protected from temptation, until he attained to a certain degree of holiness, and with this achievement it becomes harder to break over than to continue in the right way.

An Ascetic Type of Holiness

There has been a common tendency to regard holiness as freedom from evil, and consequently many well-meaning people in history have resorted to inconsistent and unreasonable ascetic practices, and a few have lived to learn that they deceived themselves, because there is no such thing as being holy apart from doing

holy things. In trying to avoid evil these people miss much that is good. As they find themselves troubled by their susceptibility to the evils of their environment, they are prone to lay the cause at the door of society instead of blaming their own lack of resistance. The lives of really successful people teach the lesson that the best way is to busy oneself with good investments and then there is but little occasion for concern about the poor ones. The farmer would make but little progress if he followed the policy of not sowing any wheat for fear tares would appear. It is only as wholesome ideas find expression in human relationships that there is afforded an opportunity for an exercise, and thus development, of the natural elements of character. Any other method brings only shallow satisfactions. People need each other. A person naturally reaches toward the sensory stimuli which come from contacts with the world of human beings, and would starve mentally if his actions were largely restricted to responses of an ideomotor type. The history of asceticism reveals just such cases of spiritual leanness, lopsided characters, showing clearly the effects of an unbalanced spiritual diet. Those who have been inclined to this conception of a negative saintliness have overlooked the fact that real moral and spiritual worth resides not in the mental attitude alone, not in the overt deed for that matter, but in a combination of the two. An illustration of this point may be borrowed from the teachings of the old Pythagoreans, whose conception of reality was later expanded by Plato and Aristotle. According to this ancient school there are two kinds of reality, numbers and unlimited space. Their understanding of numbers is similar to Plato's Ideas, and unlimited space corresponds to the things in the material world. Actual reality does not consist in numbers nor in unlimited space, but in a union of the two. Unlimited

space constitutes the stuff, numbers the mold or pattern, and the two united constitute actual being. It is something like the blue-print of the architect which, when filled in by stone, lumber, etc., gives the real product. So in the field of religion, the holy person (the real life) is not one who revels in the contemplation of lofty ideas, but rather the one who takes these ideas, as molds, and fills them in by service in the world of action. This interpretation represents the belief that when the higher ideas, desires, and motives of the self are realized in the objective world genuine success is achieved, which, from the standpoint of the ethicist is called the highest good, the *summum bonum;* but when these ideas and impulses are organized around definite religious objects this supreme attainment may be designated as holiness or saintliness.

Holiness, Positive and Active, not Passive

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Give your definition of conversion.
2. Describe in detail what has been generally regarded as a typical conversion.
3. Starting at the very beginning, carefully describe a complete conversion experience.
4. Suggest the biggest obstacles in the way of progress from pre- to post-conversion.
5. What is the general attitude toward conversion to-day?
6. Distinguish between the conversion of a child and that of an adult, especially an adult who is a hardened sinner.
7. Criticize or defend the position which says that so-called conversion is just one of many adolescent awakenings.
8. Distinguish psychologically between religious conversion and moral reformation.
9. How about conversions in other religions, especially inferior forms of religion? Take a primitive situation and suggest a parallel to the conversion phenomenon.

10. Explain the situation represented by the theological term "conviction."
11. Show how the study of the subconscious helps in an explanation of religious experience. Give James' idea of the subconscious. (See his *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 508-519.)
12. Suggest several interpretations of the subconscious. (Do not confuse this with the illustrations of mental life referred to in the preceding chapter.)
13. Explain the fact that the phenomenon which we are calling conversion occurs early in some denominations and late in others.
14. Show how a good program of religious education tends to lower the age of conversion.
15. Would you advocate an insistence upon conversion for children? Defend your position, suggesting advantages and disadvantages.
16. What are the positive and negative features characteristic of revival meetings?
17. Describe an evangelistic service psychologically, from the announcement of the first song to the time when a large number "hit the saw-dust trail."
18. Why is there so much music in a revival service?
19. Explain psychologically the preparation which is usually made for a big revival campaign.
20. Explain the fact that many people do not stay converted after the revival meeting.
21. Describe psychologically the individual who responds quickest in an evangelistic service.
22. Give a scientific explanation of shouting.
23. Analyze the mental status of an individual who has never been converted.
24. What is your idea of holiness?
25. Explain the relation between conversion and holiness.

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## CHAPTER VI

## PRAYER

In proceeding with a study of this topic the reader is asked to keep in mind the interpretation of religion presented earlier in this volume, namely, the natural tendency of human beings to get in touch with those agencies regarded as supernatural. This position would claim that apart from a power or powers upon which individuals feel dependent, there is no such thing as religion. Continuing further, the system of religious observances by means of which these desired relations with gods or God are realized is called worship; and prayer, as a part of the worship program, becomes the particular method used by people of the different religions in their endeavor to communicate with their supernatural agencies.

Worship and Prayer

Prayer seems to be a universal factor in religion, being characteristic of all types. The aims and methods, however, differ greatly among the various groups. There is a vast gulf between the crude prayer of the primitive religionist and the refined approach of a person possessing a high degree of intelligence. The usual conception of prayer, that is, the idea held by the average student working with the problem, has to do with those religions whose supreme powers have attained to the level of gods—beings who are able to reason and respond in a supernatural way when addressed by the devotee. In any refined type of real prayer there must be a deity who knows and can appreciate the inner yearnings of the person who prays.

Real Prayer Builds Around Deity

As a child I was taught that prayer was talking with God. Among Christians this is a very simple and likely interpretation, which, while holding good in a large measure, would have to be flattened out considerably to be applicable to all situations which are called prayer experiences. The treatment here, however, has to do with the superior type of communication with deities or Deity, as found, for instance, in such religions as Christianity and Brahmanism. In suggesting these examples, it is not the intention to leave the impression that the ends sought and the means used to their attainment, are the same with the Brahman as with the Christian; it is intended simply to say that they both pray on a high level. With the follower of Brahmă the immediate end sought seems to be a state, and this profound religionist does not depend so much on an outside agency (Brahmă is impersonal) nor does he need the aid of tangible factors such as friends, temples, etc., although these material helps are considered invaluable for the less informed individual who is unable to philosophize (for this one, Brahmā is personal). The wise Brahman can come into his desired experiences chiefly by meditation. The Christian, on the other hand, seems to have a different end in view. He seeks immediate relations with God, looked upon as a personal Being, and in this very fact, in and through Him, the desired end is realized. Here the goal is a personal relationship. And yet, while the prayers of the Brahman and the Christian may differ in some respects, they both represent a thoughtful method of approach to Deity. There are other religions, of course, which could be put in this same category.

Prayer With the Brahman and Christian

If it is right to assume that religion means seeking better contacts with deities or Deity, and prayer is the most refined method available for this purpose, standing mostly for

personal relationships between human and Divine, then it would seem that the best religious experiences are possible in seasons of prayer, whether participated in by individuals or groups. And it is probably in meditative prayer that the peak of religious experience is reached, here as the religionist tries to think God's thoughts after Him.

## SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE ASPECTS OF PRAYER

In a study of prayer from the standpoint of the conditions and sources from which help and satisfaction are derived, it is in order to speak of two aspects,—subjective and objective. By the subjective aspects I mean those changing and resultant states whose causes are to be found altogether within the individuals' own selves, and which can be explained scientifically, in terms of cause and effect. The objective aspects have to do with that part of the procedure in which the persons praying seem to have relations with some Alter, it being believed that the changes taking place are brought about by this "outside" Agency—separate and independent of the individuals who are praying—a contingent element or factor which can and does deliberately intervene and impose its will on the particular situation. An emphasis on these two aspects, one at the expense of the other, has led to two extreme positions, one representing the belief that prayer is altogether subjective, the other that prayer is altogether objective, in the sense in which these terms are being used. The first view is upheld by the scientist who will accept no belief which he cannot analyze and explain; all prayer phenomena are put in the same category with other facts and only that part is accepted which can be explained by the activity of natural laws. Thus the advocate of this position proceeds by attempting to explain all phenomena peculiar to prayer life by the laws of psychology. The results

The Subjective Attitude

are to be credited to auto-suggestion, a possible interaction between mind and body, or perhaps the whole process is reduced to a simple case of stimulus and response. Hence all the results of prayer are to be realized in the variable possibilities of response which are characteristic of the organism. This would do away with the efficacy of prayer except in so far as the individual is able to answer it himself or inspire others to do so, no matter whether the desired result has to do with a change in character, body, or the general world of physical things.

The Objective Attitude

The second extreme position is supported by that individual who is prone to bless and blame God for all things, and who has not bothered, or perhaps has been unwilling, to seek other explanations for strange and even simple occurrences. With this person the Alter is a reality and surely makes a difference in things, sometimes in accord with the pleadings of the subject and again refusing to heed his requests, perhaps for the suppliant's own good, the latter often interpreting the unanswered prayer this way. These two different conceptions mentioned above are traceable to two different attitudes toward God's reality and functions, it being generally true that the individual's conception of God's relation to life and the world determines the interpretation of prayer.

Real Prayer is Both Subjective and Objective

It seems that the advocates of both positions can justly claim to be in possession of facts; both are right. The difficulty arises when one extreme is maintained to the exclusion of the other. The prayer experience is not altogether subjective nor altogether objective; it is both. In fact we do not have one without the other. This is the reason it is preferable to speak of the subjective and objective aspects rather than subjective and objective prayer.

Science has an important contribution to make in the

study of this problem, and to be really helpful the scientific subjectivist should try to avoid dogmatism in his attitude. If he is right in maintaining that all parts of the prayer experience which are objectively interpreted are illusory and imaginary, then the same thing may be said of all religious experiences; in fact every spiritual value may be called into question. But many of those who have studied and experienced religion are not kindly disposed to this type of skepticism.

Then too, there are subjectivists of an inconsistent sort who are interested not so much in the science of the problem as in practical (selfish) results, and in their attitude unintentionally provide a good argument against belief in the subjective aspects only. In prayer they set up an agency and build around this imaginary power, addressing themselves to it and treating it as though it were real, and yet in no uncertain language denying its reality. In answer to a charge of flagrant inconsistency they reply that they are not fooling themselves, they fully realize the alter is imaginary, but continue the practice because it works; it is a good method to bring into harmony the forces of self and thus to realize desired ends. Belief, then, in the reality of the alter's assistance is a bubble and yet serves a good purpose. This position goes further than that type of subjectivism which says the results of prayer can be psychologically explained, without denying or disbelieving in the existence of the alter. If we could feel sure that those who assume this attitude have absolutely no belief in the reality of any alter or Alter, then it would seem to be altogether justifiable to question whether this is real prayer; at least, it is not what we are thinking about in this chapter.

Inconsistent Subjectivity

If there is to be a satisfactory appreciation of the meaning of prayer, it is necessary to consider a few of the

psychological and physiological changes which take place during the individual's prayer experience, and in doing so the hopeful and earnest student of this problem has occasion to be encouraged. In the first place it should be said that there is no objection to an attempted scientific and naturalistic explanation of any and all facts, if this can be done consistently. As far as students are concerned with making progress in a better understanding of truth, this is probably more commendable than stopping in the face of strange facts and simply saying, "This is the finger of God." Adhering to the latter method strictly is bound to check all investigation, which means no progress in the discovery of truth. On the other hand, the one deplorable feature associated with an occasional scientist's attempt to explain religious phenomena in a natural way is the tendency to deny the reality of spiritual values when they will not submit to scientific analysis. The dependable scientist of religion aims to go as far as possible experimentally, and when meeting truths accepted and verified in human experience (in so far as such truths can be verified) but which defy full explanation, posits some "gap filler"—probably "the finger of God." It is possibly true that some of those students who assume an out-and-out scientific attitude toward prayer, reserve for private practice a real place for the function of Deity.

Jesus and the Subjective Element in Prayer

Jesus, whose understanding of prayer and its methods is generally regarded as expert, was mindful of the significance of the subjective aspects when saying, "Every one who is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment." At this particular place in His great sermon, He is calling attention to the tendency to overlook the importance of the "within" and, instead, concentrating upon the overt act, and in this He condemns a negative emotional attitude.

Continuing, Jesus says, "If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and thou rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5: 23-24). The consciousness of a difference on the part of an individual between himself and some one else makes a discord in his mental attitude, and this makes harmonious relationships impossible for him. It makes no difference how favorable outer circumstances otherwise are, this negative factor will assert itself from time to time and obstruct the desired peace and satisfaction. The individual cannot expect to feel right until he has taken the beam from his eye, and surely not until then is he ready to cast the mote from the eye of his brother. And this negative feeling becomes the source of genuine infelicity in mental life by obstructing the path of the realization of ultimate values as truly and really as the "static" may repeatedly introduce such interferences as to spoil a first class radio program.

It is beyond question that a vital part of the value found in answered prayer is contributed by the individual himself—a contribution partly conscious and a part over which he does not have direct control, but which is nevertheless subjective and individualistic. Jesus made faith a conditioning element in the prayer experience which as such must be looked upon as a purely subjective factor. Sayings such as the following, along with others that could be mentioned, establish this position as a fact in His conception of what goes to make up the proper mental attitude of a person seeking supernatural assistance: "According to your faith be it unto you"; "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Jesus always demanded an expression of sincere faith of the person, this being necessary before He was able to help him. No matter what the particular con-

Faith

ception of prayer may be, concerning its aims, methods, efficacy, etc., all persons agree in giving a large place to this subjective factor called faith. In prayer the subject's mental attitude is filled with a sense of need, supplemented by a feeling of expectancy, right in the heart, or perhaps it could be said, the heart of which is the *faith element*—a psychic complex which is both active and passive in nature; that is, it is assertive in character but may also show itself in a spirit of resignation, though probably more active than passive because deep faith connotes firm determination. This represents more than the cold, intellectual attitude which may characterize sheer belief. In prayer faith helps the subject to bend forward hopefully and feelingly toward the future, toward things to come, things unseen and intangible probably, which no one is able to prove or refute by laboratory experimentation. Faith then becomes that element in mental life which enables one to assume a favorable and hopeful attitude toward the realization of values desired and expected, the measure of hope largely influencing the degree of expectation which eventually may grow in the individual's mind to a feeling of real certainty. These things being true, the strength of the soil out of which all religious experiences grow, depends on the enrichment of faith, without which, seemingly, there can be no religious progress. Here then is a large opportunity for the subject to make a vital contribution to successful praying.

Both Subjective and Objective

Man must help himself, but if this were the only source of expected benefits, prayer would be limited indeed. It is not all giving nor is it all receiving; it is both. The individual activity is by no means the whole story nor is it the most interesting part. It is desirable, with good reason, to go further and believe that a great Mind helps those who help themselves and only such, and yet at the same time feel sure that the results of

prayer can be tied up directly with changes taking place within and brought about by the individual himself.

Let us consider further some facts figuring in the individual's attitude during this experience. In earnest prayer there is concentration, and the subject's mental life is built temporarily around some particular object—material or abstract—and from this organization of interests and impulses, it is to be expected that harmony and satisfaction will result. This presents to Deity an organized self to be acted upon and used. The secret of the realization of supreme satisfaction by the early Christians in the upper chamber during Pentecost was the fact that each person had built his desires, aspirations, feelings, around a single purpose and this specific purpose in each case was identical with a common object of concentration, which enabled them to continue steadfastly in prayer, all with one accord. An organized attitude by way of concentration is possible in experiences other than in prayer, but in the latter it is more meaningful because here it takes on a religious significance, associated with which is a feeling of dependence, humility, reverence, toward the supernatural power, which always figures in religious situations. Here there is a consciousness of more than human relationships, a feeling of Divine presence, which perhaps helps to stimulate the organism to activity in an unusual way.

Concentration

In prayer of an emotional sort, and all real praying is characterized by some, and often considerable, feeling, a physiological condition is effected which helps the subject into readiness for contact with higher values. It is a generally accepted fact in science that the emotions have a direct influence on the bodily secretions, and this being true, it is without question that the psychic state superinduced in carrying out the usual technique of prayer, operates in harmony with this general prin-

Physiological Changes

ciple. Of course it may be said that many prayers are unemotional, barren of feeling, and are characterized chiefly by rational activity, or perhaps are genuinely mechanical, but in all such cases the subject fails to realize the feeling of satisfaction usually associated with successful praying. The most noticeable and important contribution in this connection is seen in the results produced by the secretion of the adrenal glands, located right in front of the upper part of each kidney, following any excitation of the emotional part of mental life. A fear psychosis is most powerful in causing these two adrenals to function in an exceptional way, but by no means is it the only psychic state which is effective in this fashion; and while no one particular emotion may assert itself in any outstanding way during prayer there is a mingling of "feelings" and to such an extent as to stimulate these glands to more than ordinary activity. The secretion of these two bodies called adrenalin, first discovered in 1901 by Takamine, a Japanese chemist, and later reproduced synthetically, has proved to be a wonderful substance in producing great bodily changes. Interesting incidents are reported by physicians in which this substance has been administered to persons whose organs, though still susceptible to stimulation, had ceased to function, persons seemingly dead; in some cases the treatment has been instrumental in successful resuscitation. Our interest here, however, is not in what adrenalin is able to do under circumstances such as these, but rather in what happens when these glands function more than usual as the result of certain psychoses, especially the psychic state produced by fervent prayer, which constitutes an important subjective factor in satisfactory praying. During these psychic experiences these glands secrete an unusual amount of adrenalin with the following results: Stimulates the heart and thus quickens the circulation; causes the liver to liber-

ate stored-up sugar into the blood, and this then reaches the muscles and encourages to energetic activity, as well as acting as an antidote to fatigue. But of the different results the most interesting here is the purgative effect, getting rid of existing toxicity; this secretion has a real cleansing effect in the mental structure of the individual. It should be said in passing that in the face of such facts as these it is reasonable to believe that the secretions of certain glands, like the adrenal and thyroid, are important factors in determining the make-up of a person's temperament. Here then are conditions subjectively occasioned which may mean a great deal in bringing about a spirit of harmony within the individual; and without doubt during genuine praying as the system is thus stimulated, and purified, and a better harmony introduced into the physiological mechanism, the subject is made to feel better, and is thus put into better condition for agreeable contacts with other values.

It is a very remarkable fact that the last and most important result suggested, the purgative effect, which is confirmed by modern research, was anticipated by Aristotle centuries before Christ in his *Katharsis* theory of the emotions. Aristotle went on the assumption that the emotions needed purification from time to time and he believed that serious poetry could be made an important means in accomplishing this end. So he speaks of tragedy as "the imitation of an action that is serious and also, as having magnitude, complete in itself; in language with pleasurable accessories, each kind brought in separately in the parts of the work; in a dramatic, not in a narrative form; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its *katharsis* of the emotions." While it is not just clear whether this is to be given a religious or medical meaning, it seems definite that the purifi-

Aristotle's "Katharsis" Theory

cation which Aristotle had in mind took place in the person and not in the work of art; it had to do with the emotions, cleansing them from pollution and spiritual disease. With him then art serves the great purpose of purifying and soothing the emotions. So we find Aristotle, over two thousand years ago, taking a position regarding the results of certain psychic states which science to-day is proving to be a fact. And thus on the basis of the foregoing it is possible and probable that the emotional element in prayer may definitely promote an agreeable feeling or harmony within the individual, which is very essential in the realization of those values which come through petitioning and communing with supernatural powers. While science has definitely verified the belief that a person feels rested and better after such an emotional experience, it must not be inferred that a deep feeling state always produces good results; an extreme emotional upheaval may have its harmful effects.

Add to all the above the fact that in prayer as the individual concentrates toward definite ends, there follows the organization of his spiritual self, which means moving from the confusion of unorganized feelings, desires, interests, to a place of stabilized understanding and appreciation, and then it seems clear that much takes place within the subject, constituting a foundation and a means by which results are achieved through prayer. This is just as necessary in successful praying as the Supernatural's part. The person must get himself ready, and stay thus, which is, as suggested above, no small nor insignificant task in the prayer program. Man's part seems to be to open the channels, and then divine energy flows in. Thus the values residing in self are given a first-class contact with other values and the Supreme Value. Generally speaking, this is man's responsibility in the whole program of spiritual progress. God always reveals Himself to the

**The Subject's Contribution**

extent that the recipient is able to receive and contain. Values are all around, but the individual must refine the perceiving agencies, open the channels whereby truths, as parts of the great Truth, can come in and find lodgment. What is true of one individual holds good for the mass of individuals; and if the world is to be made better through prayer, man has a big part in helping toward the answer.

The part which the subject plays in real prayer has been stressed, and the probability of objective aid suggested, but to get the full meaning and reach of prayer it is necessary, seemingly, to go far beyond the interplay of forces which are altogether peculiar to the individual and make definite allowance for the fact that in prayer real business is transacted with some Alter, and during the process there is an inflow of values. At least this is the belief of the average person who prays, and he does not feel there is sufficient evidence on the other side to discount confidence in this position. Some students object to the belief in a Supernatural's activity in prayer because they believe its general traditional acceptance and its *seeming* to work constitute its only justification. This seeming fact of Deity's intervention cannot be defined and explained, that is true, but the same thing may be said of much that continually goes on before our eyes and within our bodies which must be accepted as facts, unless we are to be like the man in the traditional story of the circus parade, who when seeing the long-necked giraffe go by, commented, "There ain't no such thing," even though he was looking right at it. Science accepts many things as true which it cannot explain. So in prayer there are those who believe and act upon the assumption that God makes a difference, and as long as the practice of this belief seems to work in their own experience and answers to what is

**The Supernatural as a Factor in Prayer**

considered best in life, they will be loath to change their way of thinking and acting. As one proof of the correctness of their conception they point to the fact that very often those persons who practice a mechanistic philosophy of prayer, in times of trying need reverse their policy and humbly entreat the Supernatural for assistance.

If we assume the universe to be one vast spiritual organism and the great Spirit its Soul, then it is not difficult to conceive of the universe as charged with the presence of an omnipresent Spirit, in whom all truths and values converge. Man's business is to "tune in" on this world of values. To illustrate, rich strains of music may fill the air, but it means something only to those stations and homes which are equipped and are "listening in." This would make keeping "prayed up" to be equivalent to keeping in tune with the Infinite—a harmonious relationship with the Divine will and purpose.

The individual in prayer to Deity can be likened to the trolley car in contact with the heavy feed wires. The capacity of the trolley and the use to which it can put the power are limited, while the supply is infinite, as far as the car is concerned. This is generally regarded as man's relation to God. And just as some cars are more powerful than others, so some persons are greater repositories of truth than others. The person of great soul not only can use but needs more of the spiritual charge, while the individual unsophisticated in the realm of spiritual values must soon cry, "Hold, Lord, or the vessel will burst."

So it seems from the standpoint of the sources to which the changes and conditions occasioned by prayer can be traced, it is altogether justifiable to talk in terms of subjective and objective aspects, believing that there are conditions wholly within the individual which may constitute a part of the result of prayer and also become the means for

the inflow of values, over which conditions the subject may or may not have direct control. This position gives both the subject and the Supernatural vital places in the prayer program.

Occasionally we meet the tendency on the part of some students who are strongly inclined to the naturalistic and subjective explanation of prayer to try to harmonize their mechanistic attitude with generally accepted beliefs regarding the activity of God. They endeavor to bring about this reconciliation by emphasizing the immanence of God. They say prayer is altogether subjective, and yet the divine Agency functions because God is within. While advocating only the subjective aspects, this view makes possible a contribution other than that which comes from the subject, and thus tries to include what we are calling the subjective and objective aspects. This is an improvement over that genuinely mechanistic type of subjective interpretation which confines the whole program of changes and benefits to the natural laws at work within the individual. This position, however, raises several perplexing questions, growing out of possible inferences, and may seem untenable in the eyes of those who shrink before the idea of the possibility of God's activity being swallowed up in the functioning of natural laws. Is the immanent God here really distinguished from the self which prays, or are they in the last analysis one and the same? If the latter, then the self prays to itself. This would amount to a mild type of pantheism, although not a real pantheism. Again, if the salvation of the subject praying is worked out altogether on the basis of the forces found within the self, including the immanent God, then for this individual there is no transcendent Deity. Also, does this mean that for every self there is an immanent god? If so, this runs into polytheism. It is not our purpose here to dogmatize

An Immanent God

and try to negative this position, but simply to point out where an excursus in this direction may lead. Often in our philosophizing, when failing to check up, we find ourselves, though happy on our way, running counter to facts already established in our program. For instance, James, in his psychology of the subconscious "more," sets forth the idea that continuous with each self there exists a larger power which may be but a more godlike self. This conception was not fully developed by James, but he frankly suggested the possibility of its heading up in polytheism. This, however, hardly represents James' real philosophy of God. His God, though of a limited, finite nature, is singular rather than plural, a practical God with whom man does business; in communion with this spirit in prayer something is really accomplished; values flow in with attending results.

As to the efficacy of prayer having to do with changes in the objective world, including effects upon the body of the individual, or that of some other individual prayed for, science has no definite evidence, proving or disproving, but is inclined to assume a negative attitude, except in those cases where the individuals themselves assist in promoting the realization of the desired results. The spirit of science would suggest that it is not so much a question as to whether the Supernatural is able to intervene in particular situations in the physical world, but rather can He afford to accede to the wishes of creatures limited in knowledge when in nearly every case the granting of such favors would mean the violation of natural laws upon which the very universe and all things therein depend for Nature's characteristic regularity and uniformity? Perhaps science would object most to the extreme claims regarding the efficacy of prayer in bringing about changes in the so-called world of Nature, which is a much discussed question. There are those who believe in

Efficacy of Prayer in the Physical World

prayer, having these ends in view, and offer many illustrations showing answers to prayers of this kind. There are those also who discount the value of these illustrations by showing that in many cases the supposed answers to these prayers bring inconvenience and discomfort to a large number of people. For instance, a certain man prayed that it would not rain on a particular day because he had a lot of hay down. The fact that it did not rain was taken as an answer to his prayer. This seemed good to him, but he overlooked the fact that there were many farmers who did not have any hay cut on this particular day, and in that dry season were having serious trouble to get water for their stock. It seems reasonable that an infinite Being can and possibly does meet emergencies in the world of Nature, but a careful study of this problem is likely to make a person feel that after all it is more desirable to leave the big business of Nature, including the weather, etc., with God, and that perhaps Nature's program is better all around without man's interference.

## WHY PEOPLE PRAY

The majority of people pray or have prayed some time in their lives. In this practice some are consistent, while others are spasmodic. If the question, Why do you pray? were asked the average person and he were to go into a careful examination of facts in formulating the answer to be given, it would probably take him back to his childhood days at his mother's knee when she taught him to say, "Now I lay me down to sleep." That is, in the first place he was *taught* to pray. Of course there are many whose early home training did not lead them this way and who began to pray later in life. It would seem doubtful, however, as to whether a young person today would fit the above representation as well as an older

People Are Taught to Pray

person, because the modern home does not train the children to pray and know the Bible as was the case twenty or thirty years ago. It is seriously astounding how little the High School student of to-day knows about the contents of the Bible. A multiplicity of interests have been ushered into the community and school life of the child and early adolescent, and the popularity of these interests has been established at the expense of a proper emphasis on religious experience, a central factor in which is prayer.

In addition to the element of early instruction, there is the prayerful environment which lends endorsement to what the child has been taught. In this environment he not only hears people pray but is impressed with accounts of answers to prayer, some of which show evidence of remarkable faith. And so much the more is he led to believe in the efficacy of prayer if these answers are reported by friends whom he knows well and in whom he has great confidence. The example of a few such active persons will do more toward establishing firm belief in prayer on the part of a child than can be counteracted by twice the number who practice a policy of indifference.

The Environment

Then too, there are those who later in life start praying as the result of the trial and error method. They have tried other ways in the endeavor to acquire desired values and finally hit upon prayer, perhaps at the suggestion of a friend or perhaps because they let the instinctive tendency to turn to some greater power for assistance and protection have its way, which tendency is characteristic of all human beings, and a slight evidence of which is seen in lower animals as well. Hunters tell of animals running to them for protection when being chased by more ferocious beasts. It is in a situation such as this that we have the suggested though unverified origin of "Jesus Lover of My Soul."

Trial and Error Method

After a person begins praying, whatever the reason for it may be, it is easily possible and probable too, that this same individual eventually will find himself praying largely by force of habit. This will be true unless he definitely wills it to be otherwise. Not only will this routine fashion characterize his praying, but in this very fact itself will be found a big reason why he continues to pray, if this can be called praying. This, however, is not the primary reason why people continue to pray. If this were true it would be a weak case indeed in favor of the justification of prayer. Perhaps the first and best reason which the majority of people give as to why they continue to believe in the practice of prayer is because they feel it stands the pragmatic test. In pragmatism we have a term which has become very popular in modern thought, it having come into such strong favor for two reasons: (1) because it represents a very sane philosophy and, (2) because it has had back of it some of the foremost scholars in America and Europe.

Habit as a Factor in Continued Prayer

Prayer Stands the Pragmatic Test

C. S. Peirce was the first to advocate the pragmatic principle (1878) which was given the support of William James twenty years later. Since it is so important in present-day thought it seems best to pause at this time and inquire carefully as to just what is meant when it is said prayer stands the pragmatic test. Pragmatism, which is concerned with results, fruits, consequences, rather than with standards, rules, principles, laws, may be regarded first, as a theory of reality, which would say that in satisfactions, desired results and consequences, genuine reality is to be found; this puts reality right in the heart of life's experiences. In the second place pragmatism may be looked upon as a method of testing and determining truth; if any hypothesis or doctrine works, if it bears highly

Pragmatism

satisfactory fruits, it may be said to be true; it stands the pragmatic test. It is the second use of this term which is of chief concern here. Of course this test can be applied to a belief in God, to religion itself, or to any other conception just as well as to prayer. It has already been intimated that the pragmatist aims to determine the value of a proposition, not by whether it subscribes to certain standards or principles but rather from the standpoint of the fruit it bears. Statements such as "Prove all things," and, "By their fruits ye shall know them," are spoken in the spirit of pragmatism. In attempting to apply this test, however, a possible weakness reveals itself. Who is to say whether a certain belief works in a particular situation? The subject who is chiefly involved? But a certain proposition may work for one individual; that is, it may bring desired results, and an opposite hypothesis may work for another person, bringing satisfactory results, though the results are just the opposite of those in the former case. Both conceptions have stood the pragmatic test, but since the results are contradictory, both cannot be regarded as true. One person may pray for money, another for the healing of bodily disease, still another for the agreeable feeling which comes with the consciousness of being of service to mankind, in each case successful praying being determined by the degree in which these different types of desire are satisfied. Something is needed here before the pragmatic test can be of service in evaluating the worth of prayer; we must go beyond that place where values are treated as merely relative. There must be some norm by which the value of the results is to be determined. Putting prayer to the pragmatic test means something positive only as this is done in terms of an understanding of those values which represent the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people, rather than an absolute regard for the results

desired by particular individuals. The pragmatic test then is an altogether wholesome method of testing only when the fruits or consequences looked upon as desirable are identical with those values socially recognized as good, society's supreme good usually being regarded as a real harmony between desires and those things which accord with the moral law of the community.

The following incident will illustrate the pragmatic test as a dependable method in determining the truth resident in a particular situation. A prominent educator was appointed a member of a commission whose duty it was to investigate certain conditions in China. In this work the members of the group were brought into close contact with the Christian medical missionaries, and this educator was impressed with the results medical missions were getting, and all this with very limited equipment, which tended to establish his faith in the integrity of the leaders in this particular branch of missionary work. One station he visited was facing a crisis, and unless financial assistance came very soon the hospital would have to close. The educator said to the medical missionary who was in charge of the station, "What are you going to do about it?" and the answer was made unhesitatingly, "Pray." Then another question, "But do you think that prayer will make any difference?" And then this answer in the same spirit of confidence, "My wife and I have tried it, our fellow-friends have tried it, and it has never failed to bring results." In cases such as this the pragmatic test is regarded as making a positive contribution because the fruits which prayer was believed to produce were not only the desired results but at the same time were in harmony with those values, unquestionably recognized as beneficial to humanity. That is, standing the pragmatic test in this case means that those people praying believed

The Pragmatic Test Illustrated

that prayer was the means to good ends, not just according to their own interpretation of good but rather in terms of what society had found to be genuinely and really good. In this illustration the objectivity feature of prayer suggests itself, but our only interest here is in analyzing a very important reason why people continue to pray.

So, as taken for granted in the early part of this chapter, there are definite results which follow prayer, no matter whether the benefits be considered as subjective or objective, or both. Prayer seems to work; it bears fruit and the subject believes the consequences are good. No matter whether originally adopted simply as a tentative working basis, no matter why the person began to pray, he believes that as a successful method for achieving certain ends it is verified in his experience. This individual then, as far as prayer is concerned, may be called an empirical scientist. He has tried many plans, accumulated facts, adopted prayer, perhaps as an hypothesis, deduced certain conclusions concerning its method and efficacy, and verified these, so far as they can be verified, in his own experience and that of others. Thus he is a firm believer in the results which can be obtained through prayer, the measuring-stick for its worth being a high degree of unfailing practicality.

## WHY PEOPLE QUIT PRAYING

There is a large number, on the other hand, who quit praying; not in the sense that they have fallen into a habit or routine method of approach and have thus quit real praying, but have even ceased going through the form. There are reasons for this which if tabulated would make a very long list. In the first place there are those who give up prayer because of doubt relative to its efficacy, superinduced perhaps by experiences altogether removed from the prayer life. It is a fact that as persons

Doubt

fail to reconcile religious beliefs and actual experience, often because they do not understand what to expect, there arises a widening stream of general skepticism, which very soon inundates the spirit of prayer.

Prosperity also is very often hard on prayer. The person who gets along well in business and has very few obstacles to overcome is apt to become indifferent in this respect. It is true a person grows, yet the capacity of mental life is limited; it is just so big; a person has time and energy for just so many things. To illustrate this I resort to the answer of a little Dutchman of my acquaintance who was being admonished for not retaining his Dutch while acquiring a knowledge of the English language. His reply was, "My head is just so big; as English comes in Dutch must go out." This of course is not necessarily true in learning a language, and perhaps it does not have to be true in regard to the point at issue in this discussion, yet nevertheless it seems to work out in practice that as material interests engross one's attention, they come not only to take first place but monopolize the whole thought life. Not only is prayer pushed out but many other things of value—even home and friends are forgotten as the activity of the acquisitive instinct becomes uppermost, which means that the person is lost in himself in trying to satisfy the outreachings of a selfish self.

Prosperity

Coupled with general prosperity, and perhaps growing out of it, is another reason why people quit praying, namely, the feeling of self-sufficiency. If the mental attitude during prayer is characterized by a sense of need and a feeling of expectancy in relation to some higher power, as already suggested, then it should not be expected that there would be much real praying done by those who have come to feel self-sufficient through prosperity. Holding positions of great influence and pres-

Self-sufficiency

tige, receiving the plaudits of those around, can easily lead to a feeling of self-completeness which is conducive to a tendency to look down rather than up. It would be hard to conceive of a feeling further removed from the true spirit of religion than this, and more barren of the essentials of the prayer attitude.

## THE CONTENT OF PRAYER

To take all prayers and organize them in a satisfactory way under two or three headings is an impossible task. And so with a full realization of this fact it is suggested that from the standpoint of content, prayers may be divided into two classes,—petitional and devotional. Those of petition are mentioned first not because they are more significant but because they figure more in the bulk of the average prayer. This is naturally to be expected on the lower levels of religion where the subject knows very little about a spirit of devotion. Here the petition is always for something of a material sort, and may be nothing more than a proposition for bartering. It is very common to find religionists, whose conception of values is not high, addressing the supernatural power, reminding it of something which the subject has done in its favor and then by virtue of "value received" ask that the god return the kindness. In polytheism, where there are gods presiding over different values and functions, the subject naturally prays to certain gods for certain things; or it may be that his prayer of petition is made to some departed ancestor. The object sought is usually a blessing for himself or friends, but in some cases it is for an injury to his enemies.

**Petitional Prayers**

In prayers of petition the ends sought may be either material or spiritual. Values of the latter sort are of little concern in primitive religions but by no means does it follow that the adherents of the higher religions, Chris-

tianity for instance, are but slightly interested in natural or material objects. The Christian is vitally interested in both, but it seems to be the case that as he grows in intelligence he prays more for values of an ethical and spiritual character, such as victory over temptation, kindness of disposition, strength of character, and less for the material, such as success in business, good weather, victory in war, etc. The more refined the character of the person the deeper the appreciation of refined, spiritual truths, and thus the greater their significance in his life. And so, while it is a fact that intelligent persons frequently pray for material blessings and the unintelligent for the spiritual, yet nevertheless there is a more convincing correspondence between the retarded individual and petitions for the tangible, sense values, while growth in intelligence makes for a fuller comprehension of and desire for the things of the "heart."

Material and Spiritual Values as the Objects of Petition

In speaking of one class of prayers as being devotional, this term is used in an inclusive sense, representing ascriptions of praise, thanksgiving, meditation, and even confession. It is for the religionist whose supernatural power is personal and which possesses in a measure the attribute of love, that prayers of this sort have real significance. These are far removed from the crude petitions of the savage. Earlier in this chapter it was suggested that meditative prayer bespeaks the attainment to a wholesome level of religious experience, and if meditation is given an extremely large place in the content of prayer which is being represented by the term devotional, it may be that it would be better to talk in terms of prayers of communion, as some do; and yet, on the whole, it seems that the term devotion is larger than communion and better represents this group of specific mental struggles for peace

Devotional Prayers

and satisfaction which have been set over against prayers of petition.

The well-rounded prayer contains all that has been represented as coming under petition and devotion. This is seen in a representative prayer, as the subject addresses Deity: (1) in the endeavor to bring himself into a full consciousness of the presence of the Divine; (2) in meditation or verbal expression in which failures are penitently acknowledged and in which gratitude is expressed for blessings obtained and bestowed; (3) in supplication for aid and protection; (4) in consecration to God's will and work. Often prayers such as this are formulated for the use of individuals and groups and are intended either to be repeated from memory or read. These formal expressions, however, mean very little to a person unless he puts himself into them in such a way that they breathe the real desires of his heart. If the subject comes to regard these prepared forms so devotedly as to believe that merely repeating or reading them brings about the desired results, as is occasionally the case in extreme ritualistic situations, then the method ceases to be prayer and becomes magical in character.

Contents of a Well-balanced Prayer

Prepared written prayers are very helpful for certain persons and at certain times. While such forms would constitute a serious restraint to the religious experience of many (those mystically inclined), quite often they provide for the person praying a clear and simple expression of the desires of the heart, helping into a better understanding of needs and a refinement of desires and expectations, all of which may mean a higher level of praying than the person would attain without this assistance. Especially is this true and desirable if the person, limited in fluency of thought and diction, is entrusted with the respon-

Written Prayers

sibility of leading in prayer. And yet, while the prepared prayer is valuable, as a general practice it is not wholly satisfactory because it cannot be depended upon to furnish a complete means of expression for the specific feelings, needs, emergencies of the moment, as is naturally done by prayer of the spontaneous type.

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. What is the meaning and value of prayer?
2. Distinguish between praying and saying prayers. In what way may the latter bear good fruit?
3. Do people pray more for material or spiritual blessings? What determines this?
4. Is verbal prayer necessary? Is it preferable?
5. Would a person continue the practice of prayer, if losing faith in its objectivity?
6. Could prayer have efficacy if altogether subjective?
7. Explain how intercessory prayer may be scientifically tenable.
8. To what extent may prayer be efficacious in the healing of the body?
9. Would you prefer to champion the efficacy of prayer in producing mental or bodily results? Explain answer.
10. Compare private and public prayer, as to advantages and disadvantages.
11. Why do so many people pray regularly in the evening?
12. What do you think of praying for changes in the physical world?
13. Why do people close their eyes, fold their hands, and kneel while praying?
14. How explain the fact that many invalids get great satisfaction out of prayer?
15. Which figures more in prayer, altruism or egoism?
16. Is there any truth to the statement that a person must help to answer his own prayer? Explain answer.

17. In point of value, compare spontaneous and written prayers.
18. What is your best reason for believing in the efficacy of prayer? How would you answer if asked whether you were scientifically sure that prayer produces results?
19. Which is more beneficial to an individual, devotional praying or petitional praying?
20. Explain how a knowledge of science may encourage the practice of real prayer.
21. Which figures more in prayer, emotion or intellect? Which should? Would there be any value to prayer if intellect were inactive?
22. Contrast Jesus' idea of God's immanence with the transcendence of Judaism. Which conception is more conducive to belief in the efficacy of prayer?
23. On the basis of an absolutely immanent God show how the effects of prayer would be most likely confined to the psycho-physical organism.
24. Distinguish between a program of worship which is chiefly objective and one which is largely subjective, giving an illustration of each type. (See Pratt's *Religious Consciousness,* Chapter XIV.)
25. Trace genetically the meaning and place of sacrifice in worship.
26. Give your conception of the highest and the best type of praying.
27. Make a careful analysis of the mental attitude during prayer.
28. Distinguish between prayer and magic.

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## CHAPTER VII

## MYSTICISM

All ages and all well-developed religions have had their mystics, and despite the fact that mysticism is an old and representative phenomenon, it has been generally misunderstood. In recent years much study has been put upon this topic with its many challenging and baffling aspects, but as yet it has not yielded in any large way to the efforts of scientific analysis. Perhaps this situation is due to the fact that there are serious handicaps here which do not prevail in dealing with many other phenomena. In the first place it is more difficult to secure definite data having to do with this problem, because many persons highly mystical are least able to analyze and describe their mental states. Others look askance at the idea of discussing these experiences which involve the sacred treasures of the innermost chamber of the soul. Also, there are those who, while not belonging to either category mentioned above, and willing to attempt an analysis, yet feel they have been forced to the conclusion that these infinitely spiritual truths cannot be clothed in a limited vocabulary of sensuous terms; this attitude gives to these values the attribute of ineffability. To all this should be added the fact that the word mysticism has not been confined to the field of religion or philosophy, but has found its way into the everyday vocabulary of the average man. This common usage has tended to make its meaning indefinite, and so a good strong word representing a seemingly

Reasons Why the Mystical State Is Hard to Analyze

meaningful experience has been and is woefully misunderstood.

In some respects mysticism has shared the fate of the conversion experience. For a long time it was the custom to think of conversion as an extreme, sudden change, and anything less than that could have no right to be called by this name, which position, it should be thankfully said, is being generally forsaken to-day. In a similar way the mystic has been thought of as one who reveled in ecstasy, and some persons have gone so far as to relegate him to the group of wild-eyed, noisy, impractical phantom-chasers. That this has been a rather common attitude is seen in the fact that many persons use the term most often in a negative way, and when referring to the fanciful dreamer and folk of similar sort, call them mystics. But as in the case of conversion where there are experiences recognized as real conversions apart from the sudden and "emotional upheaval" variety, so there is a tendency at the present time to discuss mysticism under two headings, mild and extreme, thus opening the way for belief in genuinely mystical states apart from those of an ecstatic nature, which, unfortunately, has been the type usually set forth as representative of mysticism. Viewing the problem this way bids fair to make desirable and seemingly practical a religious phenomenon at which it has been rather customary to look askance in many quarters.

Similar to the History of Conversion

Etymologically, the word mysticism is closely related to mystery and thus has been looked upon as having to do with things beyond human comprehension. Judging, as far as possible, from the mystic's own understanding as to what is going on when he is having this experience, a mystical state is one in which the subject has the experience of direct contact with what he considers to be ultimate reality, made possible by ways other than the ex-

Definition

ercise of the reasoning faculty, or the activity of the ordinary senses.[1] In religious mysticism the individual immediately apprehends and may become absorbed in final Reality, which he looks upon as Deity; and on this basis Christian mysticism may be defined, briefly, as a "consciousness" of the presence of God. At least this is what we shall mean by the term in this chapter. It is intended here that the term consciousness be given the broadest interpretation possible, as including much subconscious activity, because in the mystical experience as a whole the subconscious is far more significant than the normal waking consciousness, especially in the latter stages of the process.

Mild and Extreme Types

In the mild type of mysticism there is a definite and direct relationship with Deity; in the extreme type the individual claims to rise to loftier heights than simply direct intercourse with God; he ascends to that level where his self becomes united in oneness with the great Self. In the latter case very often there are manifestations which are extremely irregular and perhaps even repellent. It seems true, however, that if the pseudo-mystical situations could be separated from the genuine, these negative features would be found to have to do chiefly with the former. In an extreme mystical state material values completely disappear and the ultimate language of the subject becomes spiritual. Even friends are forgotten and with the subject it becomes solely a case of relationship between himself and Deity. He comes into an illumination and sees, hears, and feels things which are beyond the perception of ordinary eyes and ears; he becomes lost in the ultimate all-Being. It is not altogether a case of Deity enveloping the individual, although the subject may feel this to be true in part; there is an objective toward which the seeker moves;

[1] For a similar definition of mysticism, see Pratt, *The Religious Consciousness*, p. 337.

and if religion may be regarded as an active yearning and striving on the part of individuals and communities, for better relations with supernatural agencies, then mystical experiences are simply the successful climaxes of these natural outreachings of the human self.

Religious and Philosophical Mysticism

The mysticism represented in the immediately foregoing paragraph is religious in character, which of course is the type that concerns us most in this discussion. But in addition to this, or perhaps inclusive of this, is another kind,—philosophical mysticism. Let us pause at this time and distinguish between the two. As the best example of philosophical mysticism we should turn to that of Hindu philosophy, particularly as found in the Vedanta. Here is a system of pantheistic idealism. All reality heads up in an impersonal Brahmă, "Absolute Being, ground being or soul of the universe." While Brahmă is regarded as impersonal there are passages in Hindu literature which picture Brahmā as a supreme, personal God, this being done, seemingly, for the sake of the less intelligent followers in the faith who are not able to rise to the level of philosophical thought. Those who are less versed not only need to think of Brahmā as personal but make use of all possible tangible assistance,—priests, temples, self-mortification, etc. This is all right for those who do not know the higher road to ultimate reality; they are justified in going the best way they know. But for the highly trained Brahman this is an inferior method of approach; he seeks to become Brahmă (impersonal) chiefly by way of calm meditation (assisted by ascetic practices if necessary), and his ultimate objective is reached as he becomes identified with this great world of final reality.

All mysticism, whether religious or philosophical, gives distinctive evidence of the activity of both feeling and intellect in the earlier stages of the process, the emotional

element showing itself more in religious and less in philosophical mysticism, the reverse being true of the cognitive activity. In religious mysticism it is a personal Being with whom the individual seeks communion, and the fact that the subject builds around a personal object gives the experience added interest and significance. In philosophical, it is primarily a cosmic "feeling" which characterizes the mystical experience; the subject comes to feel that he is in tune with the universe of reality, and finds sweet satisfaction in a cosmic consciousness. Here it is a case of relationship between person and ultimate reality or Reality; in the former (religious) it is a relation between person and Person. Quite often philosophical mysticism is referred to chiefly as a method for the acquisition of truth, and in such cases it becomes practically synonymous with intuition.

Feeling and Intellect as Seen in Mysticism

In both cases, religious and philosophical, as the process makes progress the conscious part played by the subject decreases until finally the individual, with all personal aspects, in the extreme type, becomes lost in the universal All. At the climactic moments of this experience, in any extreme mystical state, meditation is superseded by an intuitive contact with Reality in which the subject "feels" the presence of the great Light, and here the state becomes altogether passive in nature.

This would seem to represent St. Teresa's understanding of what takes place in the orison of union. She says in this experience, "The soul is fully awake as regards God, but wholly asleep as regards things of this world, and in respect of herself;" while the communion lasts she (the soul) "is as it were deprived of every feeling and even if she would, she could not think of any single thing." The understanding is "so stricken with inactivity that she neither knows what she loves, nor in what manner she loves,

St. Teresa

nor what she wills." "Her intellect would fain understand something of what is going on within her, but it has so little force now, that it can act in no way whatsoever." While St. Teresa says the soul suspends the natural action of all her faculties, an analysis of her description shows that feeling is active, not ordinary feeling as characteristic of normal conditions, but a deeper feeling, at the heart of which is love (the soul does not cease to love, this is now its meat and drink), handling a refined material, to an appreciation of which rational consciousness is as it were dead. The situation seems to resolve itself into suspended rational activity and a deepening of the emotional stream. If St. Teresa were describing her experience to-day she would probably say that in this union the soul is subconsciously active.[2]

Genesis and Development of Mysticism

Mystical inclinations are noticeable among primitive groups still on the "customary" level of morality and religion, far below individual reflection, in which situations the desire of the subject is to get into such relations with the supernatural agencies as will bring about a sense of peace and satisfaction, which corresponds to a similar objective of the mystical person in a superior form of religion. But the experience of the savage can hardly be called genuine mysticism, and the satisfaction which he realizes through contact with higher powers builds for the most part around material values. The savage gradually develops in his conception of the supernatural, and as the religious object becomes more and more personalized, the sense of communion grows and the mystical aspects of his religion become richer and more significant. The religious sentiment is a characteristic of the savage, the same as of the more refined person; that is, his instinctive tendencies are organized around religious objects,

[2] *The Interior Castle*, Fifth Abode, Ch. I. St. Teresa (1515-82) was a member of the Carmelite Order, and famous for her ascetical and mystical practices and treatises.

and as he rises to a high ethical and spiritual level, as represented by the individualistic, reflective stage, his religious sentiment becomes deepened and more refined until eventually the religious object (or objects) becomes genuinely personal, and then this same individual or group comes to feel that the highest values are realized in practicing the presence of this fully personalized religious object,—God. It would seem to be in some such genesis and development as this that there is to be found the background of the possibility and desirability of genuinely religious mystical states.

The Brahman Mystic

From what has been said it must not be inferred that since philosophical mysticism characterizes Brahmanism, which at its best seeks an impersonal Brahmă, that the Brahman is still on the primitive level and has not climbed to that place where supernatural agencies are personalized, because this would be as unfair as it is incorrect. Instead of this, there are those who would say that the intelligent Hindu has reached this personal stage and has gone even further, and possibly is trying to conceive of a supra-personal Being, a conception of Deity beyond that with which the average Christian seems to be satisfied. Realizing the infinity of the great All he has refused to limit his conception to a person, or even a Person; the Brahmă should not be thus circumscribed. This leads the Hindu eventually into pantheism and perhaps away from what we are calling real religion in this volume, in so far as Brahmă ceases to be a power in control of persons and things. Here the Hindu takes his feet off *terra firma* and seeks to feast in the skies, failing to appreciate the possibility and need of doing both at the same time, rather than one to the exclusion of the other; he fails to realize that the human being encompassed in the flesh needs and demands for a practical program of living, a Being who cares, loves,

protects. Nothing else will do for social beings. As the Brahman thus prefers to live in the atmosphere of his far-reaching conception, he forfeits the feeling of assurance, the complete satisfaction, which others realize as they live the belief that they are in the hands of an omniscient, omnipotent, personal Alter. If some students insist that there are Brahmans who get satisfaction, I should be inclined to believe that, if they who say this are right, the Hindu gets his feeling of assurance from other aspects of his general religious program which is inclusive of pure Brahmanism.

Many Christians, on the other hand, go to the opposite extreme and consider the great All as a Person only, and then proceed to read into this Agency the frailties of the ordinary person, believing that He stoops to trifling and unreasonable things, thus making Him cheaply personal. Consistency demands a combination, or perhaps compromise, of these two extremes,—the Hindu conception and that of the mistaken Christian. It is possible and necessary to see God as a Person, but with more than just personal endowments—the great Mind which the finite mind cannot comprehend, whose infinite Self cannot be locked up in what is understood by the term Person. In other words, it is possible and seemingly proper for human beings to think of God as a personal Being and at the same time carry in mind the belief that He is probably supra-personal.

According to the interpretation presented in this chapter, the majority of religious persons, perhaps all such, are in a measure mystical. This must be so if they are correct who say the mystical tendency is a fundamental fact in religion; that the mystical state has its natural place in the general field of consciousness. This being true, there is suggested the further belief that in the mild sense of the term women are more mystical than men, which is similar to saying that women are more

Women More Mystical Than Men

religious than men. But a study of the history of mysticism may seem to contradict this position because most of the great mystics about whom we read have belonged to the male sex. This is easily understood, however, when remembering that in the history of progress circumstances have designated man as leader; he has been in the foreground while woman has occupied a secondary and often a very inferior position, it being only in modern times that she has had an opportunity to assert herself. Environmental conditions have not only denied woman her rights but, generally speaking, have occasioned her the misfortune, through the ages, of an inferiority complex, which her modern achievements are showing to be altogether unjustifiable. It is only too true that histories of nations, religions, civilizations, philosophies, are the records of the doings—successes and failures—of men. So, it is not strange at all that the majority of great mystics *about whom we have heard* have been men.

Why Men Are Seemingly Less Religious Than Women

If the assumption is correct which says that the highest truths and verities of life are found in the varied relationships characteristic of religious experience, and this seems to be generally accepted as true, then it would seem that woman of to-day is more religious, more mystical than man, because from time to time she unquestionably demonstrates the fact that she has a keener and more refined appreciation of, and is in closer touch with, the finest values of life and the world. And there is good reason why she has these keener sensibilities. The explanation, however, is not to be found in saying that she is *by nature* more religious and mystical, and thus capable of a richer religious understanding and appreciation, because this thesis would be difficult to support. Instead of this it would be better to say the luster of her religious and mystical potency has been lighted up

and refined as she has performed her characteristic daily tasks. While upon her has rested largely the responsibility of the home, its moral welfare, health, rearing of children, all of which bespeaks genuinely personal interests, man, by the very nature of his environment—economic, industrial, professional—continually has been brought into contact with the coarser, material things of the world, and his relations being largely impersonal there has been a strong tendency to obstruct the development of that side of his being which assimilates the higher and richer elements of life. This has been just as true in savage life, of the man in his fighting and hunting, while the weaker sex remained at home. The average man allows himself to become so engrossed in his everyday work that the keen edge of his natural taste for spiritual things becomes dull. This probably is the reason why he *follows* woman in the moral and civic reforms of the community, and also why he is not found so much at the church and other religious services. The boy's environment impresses upon him the idea that man must make the living, accumulate wealth, handle the world's business, and so he begins as a child to anticipate the activities which characterize later life. That is to say, very early the boy becomes obsessed with the ambition for material values which eventually leads to the situation represented above. If the young people attending a religious conference are asked why there are fewer boys than girls in attendance, the leading answer given is that the boys are working. Then another significant answer to this question is that the boys are not so interested in religious work. In these two responses is to be found the fundamental reason why the boy is so often absent from such occasions, the situation represented in the second answer growing out of the first.

The member of the male sex offers a satisfactory alibi in saying that such fierce competition prevails in the busi-

ness and work of to-day that it is absolutely necessary for him to give most of his time and energy to his ordinary vocation, and to this extent he is a victim of circumstances. Very often after a day of strenuous toil, in which he has been compelled to subdue and conceal his vexations, he relaxes, and naturally takes his poorer self home, and thus fails to give his best to his family. A careful study of domestic life shows that man's inability to make his full moral and and spiritual contribution bulks large among the factors which cost many a home its expected happiness. (In saying this I am fully aware of the tendency to-day for woman to leave the home for the factory, business, professions, and feel sure that in doing so she must pay the same price that man has paid). There are many men held in the clutches of this damaging program who would be glad to break away if they knew how and were able. All this standing alone, might seem to be an attempt on my part to paint a black picture of the modern industrial order, but the reader knows that there are many positive assets, and that all in all this is a better world in which to live than that of fifty years ago. I am just trying to show why, in terms of cause and effect, man's religious tree is not as fruitful as it might otherwise be. And if the home is the bulwark of a nation's greatness, the suggested reason for the male sex being less religious and mystical than the opposite sex, is more vitally connected with national successes and failures than can be apprehended in casual thinking.

The degree of mystical tendency, and the time when this state of consciousness will show itself most, depends chiefly upon the individual's peculiarity of mental and physical make-up, but also in part upon circumstances. If a young person comes normally into the completer and fuller life, commonly called conversion, and then continues to grow spiritually, he or she may logically expect to *feel* most

keenly the sense of nearness, fellowship, and oneness with Deity after the middle and before the close of the adolescent period. This does not necessarily mean that the consciousness of God's presence will then begin to wane but simply that the emotional aspect of the mystical tendency reaches its height at this time, for which there is probably a good reason. The small child lives and acts largely in terms of percepts, instincts, impulses, imitation, but in the early years of adolescence rational activity decidedly comes into evidence; and then as all phases of mental life function regularly a well-rounded religious constitution becomes possible. But too much must not be expected at this stage. In later childhood and youth, boys and girls are on the wing, getting ready for the future, and are not called upon to think through and struggle with the heavy problems of life; they live more under the tutelage of others who are wiser and stronger, and thus relieved of the strain of weighty responsibilities have time and opportunity to enjoy the bliss of a care-free atmosphere. While this does not shut out calm meditation it opens the way for the free play of the feeling element, which is naturally assertive at this time. This does not mean that a young person's mental life is not full and active, because he may feel from time to time that he is carrying the fate of the world on his "heart," but even so, the mental content is altogether different from that of a matured person; he is inclined more to *feel* his burdens rather than consciously realize their significance. He is probably falling in and out of love, feeling the stirrings of the sex instinct, and going through many other experiences peculiar to this period, on through to later adolescence, all of which accentuates the emotional aspects of character. Then as young people approach the close of the adolescent period they ordinarily take their places, large and small, in the world's big pro-

**The Mystic Tendency in Later Adolescence**

gram, and become interested in and perhaps burdened with the solutions of many problems, such as making good at their jobs, providing for a family, assuming responsibility of leadership in the community, etc. This calls for increased rational activity. Here the young person naturally begins in earnest to unfold intellectually, and as this process gets under way there is a corresponding decrease in the activity of the emotional element in mental life. It is always true that as a person becomes more and more intellectualized he becomes less and less emotionalized. This general principle holds good for the religious side of life and naturally is effective in determining the degree of mystical tendency.

All that has been said above pertains to the person who grows intellectually in normal fashion and will not cover the case of the individual who deliberately or unintentionally gets into a rut and remains there. On the basis of the above analysis there is no occasion for persons of middle-age or later life to become discouraged and perhaps even skeptical when realizing that they do not have the "religious feeling" which they had when younger, but instead they should understand that they are simply traveling the natural way.

**Feeling More Prominent Than Intellect**

As suggested earlier in this chapter, both intellect and feeling are active in a typical mystical state, although feeling is by far the more in evidence in religious mysticism. It is quite common to find the casual observer who is of the mistaken opinion that the emotional factor tells the whole story and that nothing whatsoever is going on in primary consciousness. In the conspicuousness of emotional activity resides the chief cause why the term "mystical" has become objectionable to many persons; they dislike a situation which has the least semblance of being under the governance of the emotions. Too much interest in feeling-states can and does

unbalance a religious experience, and yet people naturally want and need a religious program which will give the affective side of personality an opportunity to assert itself, and anything less than this is sure to be unsatisfactory. The religious mystical movements of the ages more or less have represented revolts against the dominance of the head over the heart. In the last analysis these protests resolve themselves into an asserted anxiousness for a definite and immediate relationship with supernatural agencies, which when realized brings not just a cold knowledge of truth but a feeling of this divine presence as well. And it is this emotional aspect which adds the desired richness to the content of religious consciousness.

Among the Greeks

The early Greeks became dissatisfied with the polytheism of Homer and Hesiod, because the practice of their religion failed to bring about a sense of relationship with the supernatural. Consequently the Mysteries, those of the Thracian God, Dionysos, Demeter at Eleusis, and Orpheus, became very popular and about the sixth century B.C. seriously threatened the old religious and intellectual life of Greece. Here in connection with the early influence of the Greek Mysteries the reader's attention is called to similar mystery-cults of Egypt and Persia. These mystery-religions made a strong appeal to the emotions, but the primary purpose seems to have been to bring the subject into mystic union with the supernatural, through which he achieved assurance of immortality. It was this mystical factor which supplied a something that was lacking in the old Greek theology and without which complete satisfaction could not be realized. While making many wholesome contributions to Greek life the Mysteries eventually ran into irregularities and extravagances, as is often the case with movements whose rites and ceremonies are per-

formed in secret and thus denied the rationalizing and purifying atmosphere of public approval and disapproval.

The Mysteries and Philosophy

The Greek mental attitude being characteristically rational, withstood the onslaught of this new religion, and under the leadership of great individual minds such as Pindar, Æschylus, Xenophanes, etc., an attempt was made to reform the old theology, which was a very difficult task because the average individual was steeped in the traditional interpretations of Greek mythology. Great interest was developed in the controversy between the two schools of Heracleitus and Parmenides, the former saying that everything is continually changing, "all things flow," while Parmenides taught that all reality is characterized by permanence, both these movements being but an expansion of the two contradictory principles of the early Milesian school: (1) Fundamental reality remains identical with itself, it does not change, (2) moving matter and life are identical. And as philosophical problems more and more gripped the Greek mind, reason took precedence over the senses, reflection over experience, and hence the emotional interest in the supernatural was superseded by the deeper searchings of the intellect. Thus it was left for philosophy to offer the best means for the realization of the richest values, reaching its peak in the belief that the highest good comes through the exercise of the highest faculties. Philosophy, however, meant more to the elect intellectuals than to the masses, who dwelt on the lower levels of intelligence. But while the progress of the Mysteries was thus impeded they continued to function in Greece, providing the possibility of assurance and peace for the average man in a way philosophy was unable to do. The mystery-cults from Egypt, Persia, and Asia Minor later swept into Rome and were similarly influential, and at the beginning of the present era offered strong opposition to the Christian re-

ligion. Even in Plato's philosophy some of the mystical elements of the Mysteries were preserved, and there has been occasion for much discussion among modern scholars as to whether, and if so how much, these Mysteries have influenced New Testament theology in both thought and language.

It was to be expected that the emphasis upon values resident in intellectual activity, characteristic of Greek philosophy, which was at its best several centuries before Christ, would be unable to render complete satisfaction and that the supremacy of reason would be challenged. Thus the Hellenic religious period was ushered in about 100 B.C. and continued through to 476 A.D. In this period two streams of thought were noticeable,—the Greek religious philosophies and Christianity,—the two being united finally in the system of Augustine.

Of the religious philosophies of this period one needs to be emphasized in this chapter, Neo-Platonism, a resurrection of Platonism with particular stress upon its ascetic and mystic tendencies. Here is a genuine system of mysticism, primarily of the philosophical sort, rooting itself into Greek thought, the Greek philosophers bearing a relation to this program similar to that sustained by Christ and his early followers to Christianity. While in Neo-Platonism a large place naturally is allowed for intellect, the soul itself being a "sort of image of the intellect," the path is opened for a play of the emotions in a way somewhat new for philosophy. There are elements of similarity between this system and the teachings of the Neo-Pythagoreans (100 B.C.-150 A.D.) and Philo (25 B.C.-50 A.D.), but the interest in the immediate apprehension of values is decidedly more significant here.

Neo-Platonism

The founder of this mystical philosophy was Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria, teacher of Plotinus, the Neo-Platonist

(204-269 A.D.) and Origen the Christian (185-254 A.D.), the real school of Neo-Platonism being opened later at Rome, by Plotinus, and its philosophy formulated by him. According to Plotinus the great end of all man's ambitions and activities is communion with God. In this idealistic, pantheistic system the great One is regarded as impersonal (or perhaps supra-personal). All attributes ascribed to Him tend to limit Him. It is best therefore not to try to say what He is, better to say what He is not. From Him everything has emanated and the ultimate goal of the world is oneness again with Him. He did not create the world; it is an overflow from Him. Before the human soul inhabited the body, it enjoyed a mystical union with God, but in looking downward it fell, and thus became deprived of its freedom. If the soul is to rise again above the sensuous world, it must rise above emotion, desire of outer things, and thought, by way of ecstasy, thus coming into perfect touch with God and mystically lost in Him, the seer and the seen becoming identified—the two as one. Here is the real object of the soul's love and desire, corresponding, Plotinus says, to the love which a virgin bears to a noble father. Those who do not understand the meaning of this heavenly love may get some idea of it from earthly love. The rapture of the mystic at this point is glimpsed as he exclaims, "What joy it is to obtain possession of what one loves most!" Plain is the way and open is the gate but few there be who are able to enter this paradise.

The following paragraph quoted from the writings of Plotinus, the *Enneads*, compiled by his famous pupil Porphyry, will help much in understanding the mystical attitude of Neo-Platonism. Also in this same quotation is found the suggestion of a problem often presented in a study of the mystic's story, namely, the flight of the soul to other realms and its return to earth.

"He who has beheld this beloved knows the truth of what I say, how the soul then receives a new life when she has gone forth to it, and come to it and participated in it, so that in her new condition she knows that the giver of true life is beside her, and that she needs nothing else. Such an one knows, also, however, that we must put all else away, and abide in the beloved alone, and become only it, stripping off all else that wraps us about; and hence that we must hasten to come forth from the things of this world, and be wroth at the bonds that bind us to them, to the end that we may embrace the beloved with all our soul, and have no part of us left with which we do not touch God. It is possible for us even while here in the body to behold both Him and ourselves in such wise as it is lawful for us to see. Ourselves we see illumined, full of the light of the intelligible, or rather as that very light itself, pure, without heaviness, upward rising. Verily we see ourselves as made, nay, as being God himself. Then it is that we are kindled. But when we again sink to earth, we are, as it were put out." [3]

In the New Testament

When coming to the New Testament of the Christian religion we find a definite stream of mysticism flowing through its writings, heading up in St. Paul and St. John, no matter whether it be looked upon as altogether natural to Christianity, or as showing the influence of current religious beliefs and practices. For our purpose here let us select Paul as representative of New Testament theology. Having been reared in a center of learning and highly trained in religion and philosophy, and being a much-traveled man, it is but natural to think that he was influenced by the thought-movements of his day, unquestionably by Stoicism. Be this as it may, according to Paul's own understanding, he began his Christian career on the road to Damascus, in a spectacular demonstration of the

[3] Quoted from Bakewell's *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy*, pp. 389, 390. Charles Scribner's Sons.

working of the Spirit. Here Jesus appeared unto him and spake to him, and Paul trembling and astonished recognized Him as Lord. From that time on he continued in intimate relations with God and from time to time was admitted into His presence in a very special way. In the first chapter of Galatians, Paul is deeply interested in convincing his followers that the gospel which he was preaching was "not after man"; he did not receive it from man nor was he taught it, but it came to him "through revelation of Jesus Christ." When it was the good pleasure of God to call him through His grace, he did not confer with flesh and blood; he did not go and sit at the feet of the apostles at Jerusalem, but instead repaired to the Arabian desert, and there in communion with God learned of the work which he was to do. From the very beginning of his Christian service he felt himself to be in the hands of God in a particular fashion. When he went to Jerusalem after baptism by Ananias, probably three years afterward (Gal. 1: 18), he fell into a trance while praying in the temple (Acts 22: 17) and "saw" the Lord "saying unto" him that he should get out of Jerusalem quickly (Acts 22: 17, 18). And then when he again went to Jerusalem with Barnabas, he went up, not at the call of men but by revelation. When Paul uses his characteristic phrase "in Christ," and speaks of being "laid hold on (apprehended) by Christ Jesus," it is the mystic spirit which speaks. In the matter of speaking with tongues, while wisely cautioning care and moderation, Paul says, though very incidentally, "I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all" (I Cor. 14: 18). It is probably in the following quotation that his intense mysticism reveals itself most clearly: "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient; but I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught

up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter" (2 Cor. 12: 1-4). This experience is likely a part of what happened in the trance referred to above.

Another mystic whose writings have been very influential in Christian theology is Saint Augustine (354-430), born in Thagaste, Numidia of North Africa, better known as Bishop of Hippo. Early in his life he sought help in Manichæism but finally turned to Christianity, through the influence of his Christian mother, Plato's philosophy, and the preaching of St. Ambrose. Among readers, his most important books are the *City of God* and the *Confessions*. In the next paragraph the passages quoted from the tenth book of his *Confessions* clearly show his deep feeling and consciousness of close fellowship and communion with God.

Saint Augustine

"Now to thee I speak, O my soul, thou art my better part: for thou quickenest the mass of my body, giving it life, which no body can give to a body: but thy God is even unto thee the Life of thy life. What then do I love when I love my God? Who is He above the head of my soul? By my very soul will I ascend to Him. I will pass beyond that power whereby I am united to my body, and fill its whole frame with life. . . . I will pass then beyond this power of my nature also, rising by degrees unto Him who made me. . . . When I shall with my whole self cleave to thee I shall no where have sorrow or labor; and my life shall wholly live, as wholly full of thee. . . . Where hast thou not walked with me, O Truth, teaching me what to beware and what to desire . . . ?" [4]

[4] Quoted from *Harvard Classics*, Vol. VII, p. 172, *Passim*. Translation by Pusey. P. F. Collier & Son.

Augustine's Philosophy

In Augustine's philosophy, two contradictory principles lie side by side, each receiving considerable emphasis,—the certainty of the individual's inner experience and the authority of the church. The first of these shows the influence of Neo-Platonism upon his thought, and yet this is not the whole reason why this element is so prominent in his program of belief. His own personal experiences seem to have accentuated belief in the certainty of inner states of consciousness, thus causing him to look within for reality. St. Augustine believed that he walked with God and talked with Him, and could justifiably claim Him as his own. This makes the inner experience of the individual to be highly significant. He did not seem to realize that this was moving in a direction different from an insistence upon the church and its sacraments as constituting a necessary mediating agency in the quest of the individual for salvation. If a person can have definite, direct contact with God then the church would seem to be secondary. But he believed just as firmly in the absolute validity of the second principle, perhaps more so, and in fact did more than any other person to establish the authority of the church as law. Here then are two leading points of emphasis conflicting with each other. It was in the belief in the certainty of inner experience, however, and not in the authority of the church with its priests, sacraments, and creeds, that his strong mystic tendency found positive encouragement.

Christian Mysticism

As far as so-called Christian mysticism is concerned, it was not until the 12th century that it got its start, reaching full development in the period of Classic Scholasticism (1200-1453). Monastic life offered good opportunity for the cultivation of the mystic tendency, and naturally some of the monasteries became influential centers for the spread of this movement. In looking for the main sources of Christian mysticism the student must see two

mystic streams flowing into Christianity, one by way of Augustine and the other *via* the pseudo-Dionysiac writings, both of which drew upon Neo-Platonism for the most part. We have already spoken of Platonism as a factor influencing Augustine toward the Christian religion, also the popularity of Neo-Platonism in his day, which philosophy helped him greatly in the formulation of Christian doctrine. Adopting the current Neo-Platonic emphasis upon the certainty of inner experience, it has been seen that he built a mystical program comparable with that of Plotinus. If to this is added the influence of Pauline theology upon Augustine we have completed one of the two important sources of Christian mysticism,—Augustine's contribution.

Pseudo-Dionysiac Writings

After this, in the 9th century, the Irishman, John Scotus Erigena (810-880) translated the pseudo-Dionysiac writings into Latin and thus gave to Western Europe a knowledge of Greek mystical theology. These writings, prepared probably at the close of the 5th century, and largely a working over of Neo-Platonism, made a profound impression upon the Christian thought of Europe in the Middle Ages. John of Damascus, the great theologian of the East, was also greatly influenced by these writings, which constitute the second and most dynamic source of Christian mysticism. It is an interesting fact that the West, which in the early days of Christianity was inclined strongly to the practical, to authority, to conservatism, as over against the speculative, radical tendency of the East, contributed most of the radical mysticism of Christian theology.

Christian Mystics

The first to teach mysticism was a member of the Dominican order, Meister Eckhart (1260-1327), born at Strassburg. Some have called his system "Christian pantheism," and in this pantheism is seen the influence of Neo-Platonism, he teaching that the soul actually

becomes absorbed in God. He was followed by John Tauler (1290-1361), another member of the Dominican order, born at Strassburg, who continued his master's teaching with the exception of the pantheistic element. Tauler was evangelistic in spirit, emotional, but at the same time a practical mystic. The worth of his religion was clearly manifested in his faithful and sacrificial efforts during the "Black Death's" visit at Strassburg. His master, Eckhart, also influenced two other men, John Ruysbroek (1293-1381) the Dutch mystic, and Henry Suso (1295-1366) the German mystic, another Dominican. One of Ruysbroek's followers, Gerhard Groot (1340-1384) founded the Brotherhood of the Common Life, which, as the name would indicate, made a strong appeal to the common people. From this group came Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), the supposed author of that great mystical work, *The Imitation of Christ,* which has had an enormous circulation among Christian readers. He was called Thomas à Kempis from his native town of Kempen, in the Lower Rhine District, but his real name was Thomas Haemmerlein. In the following paragraph several selections are quoted from his treatment "Of the Inward Life," Book II, Chapter I of this famous volume. This work represents not just the experience of Thomas; its content really comes from the medieval mystics.

"Turn thee with all thine heart to the Lord and forsake this miserable world, and thou shalt find rest unto thy soul. Learn to despise outward things and to give thyself to things inward, and thou shalt see the Kingdom of God come within you. . . . Christ will come to thee, and show thee His consolation, if thou prepare a worthy mansion for Him within thee. All His glory and beauty is from within, and there it pleaseth Him to dwell. He often visiteth the inward man and holdeth with him sweet discourse, giving him soothing consolation, much peace, friendship exceeding

wonderful. Go to, faithful soul, prepare thy heart for this bridegroom that He may vouchsafe to come to thee and dwell within thee. Give, therefore, place to Christ and refuse entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art rich, and hast sufficient. . . . Put thy whole trust in God, and let Him be thy fear and thy love. He will answer for thee Himself, and will do for thee what is best. Here thou hast no continuing city, and wheresoever thou art, thou art a stranger and a pilgrim, and thou shalt never have rest unless thou art closely united to Christ within thee. . . . Let thy contemplation be on the Most High, and let thy supplication be directed unto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not behold high and heavenly things, rest thou in the passion of Christ and dwell willingly in His sacred wounds. For if thou devoutly fly to the wounds of Jesus and the precious marks of the nails and the spear, thou shalt find great comfort in tribulation, nor will the slights of men trouble thee much, and thou will easily bear their unkind wounds. . . . If thou hadst once entered into the mind of Jesus, and hadst tasted, yea even a little of His tender love, then wouldst thou care naught for thine own convenience or inconvenience, but wouldst rather rejoice at trouble brought upon thee, because the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. He who loveth Jesus, and is inwardly true and free from inordinate affections, is able to turn himself readily unto God, and to rise above himself in spirit, and to enjoy fruitful peace." [5] This quotation from Thomas, as well as those from Plotinus and others, enables the reader to see at first hand that the fact which impresses the mystic most and for which he chiefly strives, is the conscious feeling of the presence of the Supernatural; and as the experience gathers momentum, going from the mild to the extreme, the

[5] Quoted from *Harvard Classics*, Vol. VII, pp. 248-250. Translation by Benham. P. F. Collier & Son.

cognitive aspects are superseded by the affective, until finally, as is especially seen in the case of St. Teresa, the situation becomes seemingly altogether a feeling state.

At first, mystic beliefs and practices centered in a few great persons, but later came to involve groups as well. Innocent, inoffensive, and often unnoticed in its early stages, but coming eventually to be recognized as a part of the growing spirit of individualism, this new movement was sure sooner or later to draw a protest from the church. Its taking deep root and eventually becoming a real factor in Christian theology can be traced to genuine causes, and to understand Christian mysticism necessitates a partial acquaintance at least with the conditions out of which it grew.

**The Soil Out of Which Christian Mysticism Grew**

At this time (1200- ), as a result of the Crusades, translation of Greek literature into Latin, etc., a new day was dawning, commercially, politically, socially. Scholasticism was showing itself to be impractical, and its sufficiency was being seriously questioned. The individual was doubting the ability and sincerity of the Christian leadership, in fact the external elements of the whole church program. This means that people were casting about for other ideas and ways of achieving salvation. In this same period, in addition to the conditions already mentioned, there came the "Black Death" pestilence, an awful bubonic plague which harassed the world in the 14th century, victims dying within two or three days after the first illness. It came to Europe in 1342, the worst wave being that of 1348. It is estimated that in Europe 25,000,000 persons succumbed to this disease. Naturally large groups began to turn their attention away from this life to the next. The already intense situation was accentuated by the fact that as the result of a dispute between the emperor and the pope, Germany was "outcasted" by the head of the church, which meant that thousands were

sick and dying without the regular ecclesiastical benedictions. Elsewhere, as grief-stricken, half-maddened religious devotees brought their best offerings to the church they were refused as tainted gold. Thus in the face of all these conditions, people were thrown back upon their own resources, and the natural recourse was a direct and immediate appeal to the Supernatural. This situation anticipated the day when Calvin would declare himself for the sovereignty of God as over against the sovereignty of the church, or perhaps that of Luther, who in his justification by faith, went much further than Calvin in stressing the significance and value of the individual's relationship with Deity. But Wesley, much later, seems to have been clothed in the spirit of the real mystic in the description of that outstanding experience of his in which he declared his heart to have been "strangely warmed."

Mysticism continued to thrive after the Reformation, showing itself in later individuals and movements. Quietism of the 17th and early 18th centuries was decidedly mystical in character. The leaders and exponents of this form of religious experience, such as Michel Molinos (1640-1696) the Spanish ascetic and mystic, Madame Guyon (1648-1717), Fénelon (1651-1715), taught that the soul has its sweetest and happiest experiences in the presence of God when in a state of quiet, when it ceases to exercise any of its faculties. Its proper attitude is passive not active, which really calls for self-abnegation. God cannot speak to an active, striving soul, or perhaps it could be better put this way, an active, striving soul cannot hear the voice of God. The rapture and bliss of the soul in communion with God is altogether beyond an interest in rewards and punishments; it cares neither about salvation nor damnation. The Quietist seems to have been excessive in

Quietism

his love for God, at the expense of love for his fellow men. This doctrine which taught an immediate relation between individual and God, while not disapproved by the pope at first, eventually fell under the ban of the church, and logically so because it seemingly suggested the possibility of the priesthood of all believers, which, if accepted, would nullify the then current belief in the church as a necessary mediating agency between man and Deity. Among the Quakers, founded by George Fox (1624-91), strong Quietistic tendencies of the mystical sort were noticeable.

When Germany was barren of real spiritual life, when it was common to feel that orthodox Lutheranism meant assured salvation, Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705), and later August Hermann Francke (1663-1727), led in a movement called Pietism, which came to be the prevailing note at important universities, this being especially true of Halle. Here there was a strong emphasis upon religious feeling as over against doctrinal controversies which were commanding considerable attention in that day. It was really a reaction against the controversies of the Reformers. Personal piety was urged, a personal religious experience that would bear fruit in life. Here there was a strong emphasis upon good, everyday living, such as grows out of a correct interpretation of the Scriptures. And in this fact it becomes evident that this movement was more practical than mystical. In fact, Pietism is mentioned here not because it is particularly mystical but rather because it shows a revolt against understanding, in favor of feeling, which is common to mysticism, and also because the teachings and practices of this group influenced the Moravians, who, patterning their church after "Spener's model" sought as their great objective, "ultimate union with the Saviour."

Pietism

While mysticism was making itself felt in Christianity

there was another religion, great in numbers, in which the same type of seed had been planted, germinated, and grown to considerable proportions,—Mohammedanism and its Sufism. The Sufis are the mystics of Islam, so-called from *sufi* (wool), the early exponents of this movement having worn coarse garments made from wool. Sufism began in Palestine in the latter part of the 8th century and emphasized a feeling of God, at the expense of the significance of the cognitive element in mental life. And yet in less than two centuries after its origin, Sufism was reduced to a system and stressed largely doctrinal aspects, thus opening the way in the program for genuine intellectual activity. Al-Ghazali (1059-1111), the greatest theological mind in the history of Islam, is the best known Sufi, having become a mystic in the latter part of his life. He was an earnest searcher after truth and was anxious to rescue his faith from the clutches of a barren speculation, and bring into clear perspective the reality of an experience in which man might live his love for Allah.

Sufism

In a religion which so emphasizes monotheism as does the Moslem faith ("there is no God but Allah") the mysticism would naturally be theistic, and yet in this system so much was made of the existence of God, overlooking the existence of other things, that some parts of Sufism became purely pantheistic. Two great ideas rest in the mind of the Sufi: (1) the One, He is the only fact; (2) the "Way to the One." Here is (1) the great objective and (2) the technique to be used in reaching this end,—the "journey to the rose garden of Union." The way is open to all, even to the very peak of ecstasy. This movement began to decline in the latter part of the 15th century but was resurrected as Neo-Sufism in Turkey in the 19th century. Although confined chiefly to Persia, Islamic mysticism has been successful also in Arabia, Turkey, and India.

In the early part of this chapter it was pointed out that *in a mystical experience the subject believed himself to be in direct contact or communion with Reality,* in extreme cases becoming lost in oneness with this Agency, and in the individual expressions and programs of group movements which we have examined, this has been seen to be the dominant note. The chief psychological fact set forth thus far has had to do with the activity of feeling *vs.* intellect, our position being that there is more evidence of feeling and less of reason in religious than in philosophical mysticism, feeling taking precedence in both cases in the latter part of an extreme state.

This phenomenon is so interesting and seemingly significant that every student should be anxious to go as far as possible in a scientific analysis, remembering of course that while psychology has made some progress along this line it is by no means ready to write *finis* to its chapter of attempted description. In an endeavor to say just what is happening in a mystical state, interpretations and descriptions have been offered in literature, running all the way from the position of the devotee who feels sure that it is a situation altogether under divine control on to that attitude which believes a naturalistic explanation can be made of the whole procedure, ascribing here a large place to auto-suggestion, self-hypnosis, etc., adding also that all features not understood are due to principles and laws not yet discovered. The latter position represents the purely scientific attempt at analysis.

Mysticism Analyzed

The big question raised by these two contradictory positions is whether there is objective reality to the mystical experience, perhaps whether it is all this, or whether it can be explained altogether subjectively; that is, are we to find the source of explanation of this phenomenon in some agency separate and apart from the individual, or does it reside

wholly within the person's mental life? Be this as it may, dependable data must be collected and scientific methods applied, if there is to be an improved understanding, here or elsewhere. In its research science must build its hypotheses and try them out, hoping to explain the difficult features by known facts in psychology, and thus move on to verifiable conclusions. For purposes of science this is the only way. In this spirit Coe, in his *Psychology of Religion*, endeavors to explain this phenomenon as a passing from self-control to automatic control, the mystical problem rooting itself in the fact that a person but partially anticipates and controls the changes of physical and mental life. He believes there is a continuous series from the loss of self-control of the savage caused by drugs, etc., and attributed to "possessions," on up to ecstasy of mysticism which would be the maximum of "possessions"—an extreme automatism. In this connection the experience of the mystic in trance is explained by the relaxation of muscles and the breaking down of mental inhibitions, the feeling being likened to that which comes from the use of narcotic drugs.

Coe

There are those who, while not willing to accept the interpretations of the mystic who sees all mystic values as coming "from on High," yet cannot accept the naturalistic explanation as fully satisfactory, believing that there is figuring in this experience an element not ordinarily understood to be an inherent part of the individual. James is the best known representative of this position. While claiming that his material for a study of this problem would have to be gathered nearly altogether at second-hand, because of his lack of the mystical tendency, he leaves a place for belief in the activity of an "outside" agency. At least he is willing to go on the assumption that mystics are possibly right in making this claim. This type of attitude is to be found only in that scientist who is

Both Subjective and Objective

philosophically inclined. Science aims to accept only experiential facts based on what is commonly known as sense data, and yet many scientists do not stop with this method of positivism. The student of religion who adopts this rigid stand, especially at this stage of the game, will face many difficulties, because in the psychology of religion some of the representative "working bases" are but inferences, and not genuinely verified facts. The philosopher, in working at his problems, stays with the special sciences as far as they will go, and from that point may proceed on the basis of reason, or intuition, or perhaps both. A good scientist, philosophically inclined, like James for instance, can be counted on for dependable formulations of religious principles. It must be understood, however, that in so far as a scientist proceeds thus, he ceases to be an empirical student. If the proposition is accepted, that in a religious phenomenon there are elements which are objectively real over and above the mental processes of the subject, which of course the empirical student will not admit, then a part of the problem is lifted above science. Only that which belongs to the subject can be subjectively described. It seems, however, that some such position of compromise as represented earlier in this paragraph hands over to the psychology of religious experience a task sufficiently large, and the more a person knows about the subjective aspects of this experience, even though efforts are confined altogether to this phase, so much the more real and profitable will mystical values seem.

Even though objectionable to the nonscientific mystic, psychological explanations are bound to be helpful. If the mystic will carefully observe the fact that as a definite part of his technique he usually "closes his eyes" to the outside world and concentrates upon spiritual ends, which is central in the whole procedure, probably regulating his feelings by means of breath control, maintaining certain bodily positions,

etc., he will see that there is much that can be clarified by a psychological study.[6] He will see that fundamental laws in human nature are at work and a knowledge of them will aid him; that here the same processes are going on as in any religious experience, and that the only real difference between a mild and extreme mystical state, is that in the latter the different mental faculties have varied their degree of activity, which makes possible, as the mystic sees it, a more refined type of communion. If this is true, "the mystical faculties of human nature" to which James refers is possibly a misnomer, it being better to think of the ordinary faculties as mystically stimulated.

The Mystic and Science

The mystic and the scientist should get along well together, and will, if both promise to steer clear of dogmatism, it being necessary here for the scientist to be just as careful as for the mystic. It is only as they help each other that genuine experimental work can be done and progress made. The honest mystic must be regarded as something of an authority for what happens in his own mental life. If these two join hands then much can be expected as the result of scientific analysis, but if they assume negative attitudes toward the value of each other's efforts very little progress can be expected. Take, for instance, a particular problem like the belief of the mystic that during a trance his soul departs from his body, which is a fairly common claim in an extreme state. Here the dogmatic mystic may proceed in a very definite fashion with his description. He is sure of every part of the experience, quite different from St. Paul, and insists upon his interpretation being accepted at face value, no matter whether or not it conflicts with known laws of mental processes. On the other hand, in a situation like this, an extreme position in

[6] For a good illustration of this the reader is asked to make a careful examination of Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises.*

science would be to say that this is just a neurotic condition, and let it go at that; or, the psychologist may say this experience represents an illusion, due to a dislocation of masses of sensations; and if insisting that this is a correct description, it becomes very annoying to the mystic who is not ready to believe that this particular experience is due to some irregularity in the working of his mental machinery. Right here is the opportunity for the two to get together and be mutually helpful. The facts in the case are that this very explanation is made of the mystic's belief that the soul leaves the body,—a dislocation of masses of sensations,—but the mystic must appreciate that this is just an honest attempt on the part of science to solve this difficult problem, and just as soon as this hypothesis shows itself unequal to the occasion, it will be dismissed for a better one.[7] Science must work in terms of hypotheses looking forward to dependable conclusions, those which will stand the test. If science and religion join hands and proceed in mutual respect, each one believing that it can be helped by the other, the mistakes in each will be banished and truth will shine forth with the brightness of the noonday sun.

Psychological Explanation

In attempting to offer a psychological explanation of the mystical tendency we fall back upon the same general explanation used in dealing with sudden conversion, namely, a large subconscious field. The mystic probably has a large marginal reach and a small conscious area. That is, the mystic lives much, more than the average, under the dominance of instincts, impulses, emotions, and depends more upon the activity of the intimate senses, kinæsthetic and organic, for the raw materials of his spiritual life. This does not rule out the functioning of the cognitive element in character, but simply stresses feeling as the prevailing factor in mysticism, this being true

[7] See Coe, *The Psychology of Religion*, p. 278.

even of the philosophical type, although as pointed out previously there is more intellectual activity here than in religious mysticism. The mystic in characteristic fashion gets away from the higher senses' control and lives much under the governance of the lower sense complexes. The person of a non-mystical nature is strongly inclined to rationalize his truths, because he has a large conscious field. The external senses, sight and hearing chiefly, provide the material which feeds the reflective side of mental life, and so the non-mystical person depends primarily upon the activity of these senses. The mystic cares less about seeing, hearing, etc., preferring to *feel* the values, the original impressions coming by way of the intimate senses.

Quite often the mystical state is likened to the results obtained from the use of anæsthetics, narcotic drugs, and intoxicants such as alcohol. Perhaps the reader has heard some person try to describe the feeling of buoyancy which comes with intoxication. The resemblance between a mystical condition and experiences such as these lies in the fact that in both cases a pleasant feeling-state is superinduced; also in the state caused by a stimulant, an intense sensitivity may be induced carrying with it the possibility of abnormally keen discrimination which is suggestive of the illumination characteristic of the mystical experience. No one, however, can be definitely certain as to whether or not this is a first-class analogy. It goes without saying that the mystic is unwilling to believe that a hyperæsthetic condition, exalted sensibility, is able to explain everything represented in the far-reaching insight or awakening which comes to him in his experience. Then, too, it is easily possible to be misled as the mystic and intoxicated person in describing their respective states say, "It feels good." It is probable that the quality of feeling-tone belonging to the mystical experi-

**The Mystical State vs. the Condition Caused by Intoxicants, Etc.**

ence is as different from that of the intoxicated person, as the degree of satisfaction or pleasurableness resulting from doing a kind deed is different from that associated with eating a plate of ice-cream. At the present stage of investigation it is hardly justifiable to assume that the "drunken consciousness" is a part of the larger "mystic consciousness." [8] While there are elements of similarity, it seems these are two different situations. There are psychological and physiological features in both mystic and drunken states, but the mystic state belongs more to the former realm, psychological, and the drunken state to the latter, physiological. If putting this problem on a strictly scientific basis and explaining the mystic experience by auto-suggestion and self-hypnosis, and the drunken condition, by alcohol, it is clear that the chief source of stimulation in the one case is mental, in the other, physical. Add to this the common belief that the mystic tendency is inherent in the normal person, which gives it an instinctive basis, as over against the acquired desire and tendency of the drunkard or drug addict, which means no desire or tendency at all preceding the first state. If the mystical state is the result of such an innate disposition, it would then have a deep, characteristic mental or spiritual content not inherent in the drunken state. This position in modern thought being correct, relative to an inherent mystic tendency, it should be expected that the quality of feeling-tone in the mystical experience would be very different from that associated with intoxication.

Other differentiating factors might be mentioned. Often a man when drinking can be persuaded in favor of certain decisions and efforts, which could not be done under ordinary circumstances. This is due to the fact that the higher faculties have been deadened, thus mental inhibitions broken down. In a mystical state the reasoning faculty may cease

[8] See James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 387 .

to function in regular fashion, not because the intellectual side of mental life has been paralyzed, as with the drunken man, but rather because another side, the emotional, has taken precedence, seemingly better able to handle these particular values, and thus the cognitive element of personality simply surrenders its prerogatives for the time being. Also, while the subjects in both situations may seek to repeat the "pleasurable" experiences, there is a difference in the attitudes assumed toward the values obtained, and one has a right to be influenced by individuals' attitudes which have evolved from their personal experiences. Apart from cases in which reason has been impaired, the subject's idea of the ultimate worth of the values involved must be regarded as vital. The victim of narcotic drugs may seek the state, impelled by an acquired physiological tendency of the organism, and yet his reason tell him clearly that the results are harmful. Invariably as this person comes out of his debauch, and the attendant phenomena reach the level of normal rational consciousness, a period of remorse sets in, which is altogether different from the mystic's depression, the latter being given another explanation in a later paragraph. The mystic, however, except in neurotic cases, believes, and with seeming justification, that from first to last his values are positively good. In fact, the *Yogi* mystic of India would evaluate the worth of his union with the divine spirit on the basis of its results. As the individual practices the *Yoga* technique of approach (observing certain types of posture, breathing, and diet, meditation and moral discipline) he achieves a highly intensified mental state, freed from all restraints of physical relationships, and in the case of a genuinely successful experience he believes that he brings back a sweetness that changes his very personality for the better; the illumination is supposed to light up the whole of life ever afterwards.

As to the value of cultivating extreme mystical states, this will have to be left to the judgment of those personally concerned. If the fruits are good, judged from the standpoint of those values which society recognizes as best, there is no question but what they will prove to be positive assets in religious life. But there are several possible dangers against which the mystic must continually guard himself. In the first place, this state of consciousness may be cultivated in such a way by persons, especially those neurotically inclined, as to be harmful to both mental and physical health. If it causes a permanent diminishing of the activity and influence of rational consciousness, accompanied by a loss of will power, and puts life under the general dominance of feeling, then the practice must be looked upon as genuinely negative. Here would be a situation opening up the way toward split-off mental states, thus vitiating the likelihood of a unified personality. Cases such as these have led some persons to the mistaken belief that all extreme states are pathological.

Shall Mystical States Be Cultivated?

Dangers the Mystic Must Guard Against

Then, too, the mystic should seek to avoid dogmatism, that attitude which demands that his own particular type of religious experience be made the criterion by which the religion of his fellow men shall be judged. He should be acquainted with the fundamental fact that in the discovery and conservation of religious values the temperament of the person is bound to find expression in its own natural way. So some individuals may expect to be just mildly mystical, others extremely so, there being a few in the latter group for whom the mystic trance will be natural.

Dogmatism

Again, the mystic should bear in mind that this experience is individualistic and may easily lack social value, perhaps may cost society something. While it is generally

denied that the mystic's aim is in any sense selfish—it is all for the glory of Deity—yet there are situations in which this seems to be the case. The ascetic mystic who retires from the world in order to intensify his religious life, may succeed in doing so, and yet be open to criticism. He belongs to that group who believe that the way to do good is simply to depart from evil, overlooking the necessity of clinging to that which is good. This type of mystic has forgotten his fellow men, having no vision of that day when "man to man the world o'er shall brother be," and consequently is doing nothing to bring it about. This attitude can never denote progress; it may mean purity of character but never can develop into a resourceful, giving life. A person helps others and builds up a resistance to evil, not by seeking a retreat but by bravely facing and doing his tasks. Even if his ascetic practices, which take him away from the coarse and contaminating associations in the world, bring about a refinement of spiritual nature, this may at the same time mean an intensification of susceptibility to temptations which hitherto have been of minor significance; and eventually the individual finds his whole self dedicated to the endeavor to overcome minor personal evils, victory over which is of small value to himself as well as meaningless to others. Then too, living mostly unto himself, apart from society, he develops an unbalanced personality and finds when coming from the mountain-peak of communion with Deity that the business of his mental life is dull and moves on a low plane, the reason for this being that he does not possess and thus cannot build around those groups of stalwart feelings and ideas which the normal person develops through business, social, and family relationships. And so this type of mystic naturally experiences periods of dullness, depression, and even spiritual agony, corresponding in intensity to those mo-

The Ascetic Tendency

The Mystic's Depression

ments of ecstasy in the mystical state when it seemed to him that the richest nectar of paradise flowed over his soul.

Practical Mysticism

The greatest benefits of mysticism, as well as its ultimate significance, are realized only as the mystic transmutes his acquired values into such practical assets as will assist in real achievement, and this cannot be done in isolation from society. Success cannot be achieved apart from others; in a world of social beings there must be an exchange of values. The mystic may feel that the communion feature of his particular mental states has value in itself, which is no doubt true, and yet he must go further; this should be the means to a greater end—others. It would seem to be an incomplete and selfish program which would allow an individual to retire into the heart of Reality and feast upon the "sweetest" verities, and not ask him to bring any of these values along back, nor to show others the way to the "rose-garden of Union."

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Give an original definition of mysticism.
2. How would you differentiate between religion and mysticism?
3. Is every religious person more or less mystical?
4. Would you prefer to champion or condemn the negative attitude which is so often assumed toward mysticism?
5. Analyze psychologically a mystical state.
6. Describe psychologically the type of person who is the exact opposite of a mystic.
7. Explain why some people are so much more mystical than others.
8. Suggest the dangers as well as the positive values of mysticism.

9. What would be good criteria for determining the length to which an individual should go in cultivating the mystical tendency?
10. How do you explain the fact that history shows mysticism to have come in waves?
11. With the average mystic, is the mystical state an end or the means to an end? Which should it be?
12. Describe the technique of a practiced mystic.
13. Analyze the happenings on the Day of Pentecost in terms of the methods and achievements of the mystic.
14. What mysticism is there in the New Testament apart from that referred to in the preceding chapter?
15. Compare an ecstatic state in Christianity with the Nirvana experience in Buddhism.
16. How do you account for the strong mystical tendency characteristic of the Hindu?
17. In what way does self-mortification assist in bringing about a mystical state?
18. Is the "holiness" person usually an adept in mystical practices?
19. Apart from anything said in the preceding chapter, give an explanation of the belief that the soul leaves the body during certain mystical experiences.
20. Is the belief in a personal Alter conducive to greater activity of feeling or intellect in a mystical state?
21. Would you expect a well-developed mysticism on the lower levels of religion? Explain your answer.
22. Explain the relation between the following terms: mysticism, ecstasy, intuition, insight, illumination.

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## CHAPTER VIII

## IMMORTALITY

Immortality o'ersweeps
All pains, all tears, all fears; and peals
Like the eternal thunders of the deep,
Into my heart this truth—Thou liv'st for-ever!

Anon.

An Old Question

Down through the ages man has been deeply concerned with that familiar question raised in Job—"If a man die, shall he live again?" In the *Enneads,* as found in Bakewell's *Source Book,* Plotinus, the Neo-Platonist, begins his discussion of the soul by asking a similar question—"Are we all immortal? Or do we utterly perish? Or, a third alternative, does part of us pass away into dissolution and destruction while part—the real self—is everlasting?" [1] Belief in a future life showed itself extremely early in the program of religious conceptions, perhaps at the very dawn of human consciousness, and yet it is not known just when it originated. The ancient custom of placing food, weapons, utensils, etc., with the dead, indicates the belief that the departed would have some use for them, which would be possible only if they continued to live. The Egyptians observed this practice 5000 years before Christ, but by no means is this to be looked upon as an index to the time when the belief in immortality became established.

It was very natural that in primitive days the burial places

[1] Bakewell's *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy,* p. 340. Courtesy of Charles Scribner's Sons.

of the deceased should be regarded as religious shrines. In time the dead were thought to leave the tomb; belief in the possibility of their assisting those left behind deepened; and eventually ancestor worship became an important element in some religious systems, all of which had as its necessary background a belief in some kind of future existence. And when the idea of immortality became fully accepted, the ceremonies of worship having to do with this belief would naturally tend to intensify the attitude, and finally lead to the formulation of definite immortality programs of worship. It is a common fact in the history of religions that groups have not simply wondered about the reality of another life, but taking it for granted, have gone further and speculated as to possible conditions regulating this future existence, these speculations in time becoming an integral part of their systems of religious beliefs. As we proceed it will be evident that the concept of immortality has had its greatest significance in connection with supernatural agencies supposedly in control of both the visible and invisible worlds, heading up in the fact that disbelief in immortality always involves the probability of disbelief in Deity. It will be our task at this time to examine the attitudes regarding a future life as found in the great religious systems of mankind.

Immortality as Seen in the Great Religions of the World

The ancient Babylonians and Assyrians showed but little interest in the idea of a future existence; they were nothing like the Egyptians in this respect. Here there seems to have been an irrespondence of the imagination to the challenge of the Beyond. In both myths, *Ishtar's Descent* and the *Gilgamesh Epic,* a gloomy picture of life after death is set forth, similar to that presented in the Old Testament. These people believed that a departed soul continued to exist and they buried tools, weapons, and ornaments with the dead, but the existence was a very

Babylonians and Assyrians

undesirable one. In a vast compartment in the center of the earth, a house of perpetual darkness in the underworld from which no one could hope to escape, dust constituted the regular food. Those who met death by the sword or on the battlefield could expect a little better treatment; they were given pure water to drink. Nothing was considered more unfortunate and horrible than for a body to go unburied, this always resulting in the ghost wandering here and there with other outcast spirits, and feeding upon the off-scourings of the earth. In the myth of *Ishtar's Descent* the goddess goes down to the gloomy abode to rescue her lost youthful lover, Tammuz. She is evidently successful on her mission because the situation changes from one of gloom to happiness. But even so, this resurrection did not point to another life of happiness for the departed, as the Osiris myth did for the Egyptians. These people seem to have gotten no further than a belief in this dark underworld.

Gilgamesh Epic

In the *Gilgamesh Epic* of the Babylonians and Assyrians the hero Gilgamesh goes on a great journey, hoping to find his exalted ancestor Utnapishtim and learn from him the secret of immortality. After many wanderings Gilgamesh discovers the dwelling place of this ancestor, but despite serious efforts to teach him the secret he must go away disappointed. Utnapishtim, however, does tell him the interesting story as to why he and his wife came to be dwelling in this far-away abode where Gilgamesh found them. It is as follows: The gods, actuated by a certain deity Enlil, decided to destroy the city of Shurippak by means of a flood. One of the gods friendly to Utnapishtim told him of the plan and advised him to build a large ship which would accommodate his family, cattle, possessions, and in this way he could survive the deluge. He did as directed, and then the rains descended, continuing for six days and nights. Finally the storm ceased and the

waters began to subside. The master of the ship sent out a dove but the waters covered the earth and it could find no resting place and thus returned to the ship. Later another bird was sent out with similar results. Eventually a raven was despatched and as it did not return, this was taken as a sign that the waters had settled. Utnapishtim then left the ship and made a sacrifice to the gods. Enlil, the instigator of this whole destructive program, at first was angry that any persons should have escaped, but finally became reconciled to Utnapishtim's good fortune and decreed that in the future he and his wife should be gods, and abide in this far-away dwelling place where Gilgamesh discovered them.

Egypt

In the religion of ancient Egypt a tremendous emphasis was put upon immortality, and here there was worked out a most elaborate program regarding the future life. Food, instruction, etc., were placed in the tomb for the benefit of the *ka*, a sort of body-soul which was likely to return to the body any time. It was thought that the condition of the body affected the soul's welfare, and consequently in the interest of the preservation of the body fine methods of embalming were developed. In this the rich families had a great advantage because they were able to pay for the best and most expensive methods of embalming. It being the duty of the living to care for the dead, every person was anxious to leave offspring which would insure this attention, and in many cases endowments were set aside to guarantee the care of the body.

Transmigration

On the authority of Herodotus it was believed for a long time that the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul (metempsychosis) prevailed in old Egypt, and that according to this system the soul did not begin its transmigration journey until the body began to decay. Thus good embalming saved the soul from a part of its undesirable journey through different animal forms before

it again inhabited the body, which journey, for the average person took approximately 10,000 years, for an adept, about 3,000. The inference here would be that if the body did not decay the soul would never start its transmigration. But all our dependable knowledge along this line to-day comes from the inscriptions in the tombs, and on this basis there is no justification for accepting Herodotus' representation of the transmigration of the soul among this people. Then, too, it is impossible to fit this doctrine into what we know of the Egyptian religion. As far as the burial of food, Book of the Dead, etc., with the departed is concerned, the main idea seems to have been that these were for the sustenance, guidance, etc., of the *ka* when it returned, perhaps from time to time. There are those students, however, who think that the more intelligent of the Egyptians, that is, those acquainted with the esoteric doctrines, even though they subscribed to these customs, really did not believe in their value for the *ka,* but instead looked to a spiritual resurrection. This supposed conception set forth as representing the attitude of the Egyptian *intelligentsia* harmonizes with the view held by the majority of thinking Christians to-day, the latter having turned away from the idea of a bodily resurrection.

Osiris Myth

At the very first, in the religion of old Egypt it was generally believed that the future life was simply an extension of this life, and the dead dwelt in the sands to the west where the cemeteries were to be found. Another belief was that the departed had their abode in a lower world. But in time, due to the influence of the Osiris myth the abode of the dead was lifted to the sky. According to this myth, Osiris is slain by Set, god of the night, and his body cut up into pieces and the parts scattered; but due to the persistent efforts of his wife Isis and son Horus, the wrong is avenged, the different pieces

of his body brought together, and Osiris experiences a blessed resurrection, becoming eventually the supreme Judge in the next world before whom, with his forty-two associates, the dead must appear and give an account of the kind of lives they have lived. A significant result attending this event is the fact that eventually the resurrection of Osiris made possible a similar experience for all believers. At first only privileged classes could hope to benefit by this resurrection and be with Osiris in the sky, but as the democratic spirit grew in old Egypt the common man came to feel that he too could rise to be with Osiris, and even become identified with this Supreme Ruler of Heaven. On the basis of the above facts and others which might be suggested, it is very evident that contradictory conceptions existed among the Egyptians, as elsewhere, but this must not be explained by saying these ancient people were not sufficiently advanced to a logical stage as to be able to realize the significance of these inconsistencies, but rather by the fact that as new conceptions developed the old ones continued to abide, and so they all remained side by side, which is the same situation that prevails in the Christian religion at the present time.

The Early Vedas of India

The Vedic [2] literature of early India shows that there was a desire for a future life, although the attitude toward the Beyond was very vague. In the oldest conceptions having to do with a future existence the dead were believed to exist as ghosts, but at the same time continued to be in need of bodily sustenance. Then this hazy notion was superseded by the belief that at death the righteous, those who had sacrificed to the gods, etc., went to a heaven of light and bliss, a realm in which the god Yama was supreme, while the wicked were thrown by Indra and Soma into a dark bottomless pit beneath the earth, from which they never could expect to be liberated.

[2] The Vedas were probably written 2000-800 B.C.

As time went on these beliefs crystallized into a more definite conception of heaven and hell.

It was not until the Upanishads [3] were written that the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul appeared. The introduction of this doctrine brought confirmation of the belief in immortality, teaching as it does that the soul comes into this world from a previous existence and at death continues its journey into another form. This is different from the Christian religion, which has taught two doctrines regarding the origin of the soul: (1) creationism, which says the soul is created in each individual at birth, (2) traducianism, teaching that the soul is propagated by generation the same as the body, neither one of these two doctrines asserting the existence of the soul anterior to this life; and then at death, according to Christianity, the soul's "living again," as well as its birth, is in the hands of the Creator. As over against this, the transmigration doctrine, presupposing pre- and post-existence, makes immortality to be something that is not given to the soul in the sense that it comes through the grace of God, not conditional as something which must be earned, but instead, is a fact inherent in its very nature.

Upanishads and Transmigration

The doctrine of the transmigration of the soul of course was in direct conflict with the older idea of heaven and hell, but the ingenuity of the speculative and imaginative Hindu mind easily brought these two contradictory attitudes into accord by making heaven and hell temporary stopping places for retribution as the soul migrated from one state or form to another. In all this it was believed that the deeds done in one life determined the condition of the soul in the next state, which was simply the Law of Karma at work, transmigration thus becoming really a means in the interest of retribution, which in a large measure took the responsi-

[3] The earlier parts were probably composed 800-600 B.C.

bility for the welfare of the soul in the next life out of the hands of the gods. In the transition from the Vedic conceptions to a fully-developed Brahmanism the great objective of the intelligent religionist came to be oneness with Brahmă. And it was and is thought that the soul does not have to wait until the next life for this experience of spiritual union with ultimate Reality; it is possible now, presumably an eternal fact for those who will have it so. A study of the development of the religion of India shows it to lack the concreteness, consistency, and high moral tone which usually characterize those religions which, as opposed to Brahmanism, have had personal founders; but by no means should it be inferred here that the fact that a religion has had its beginnings in some great person is a guarantee against inconsistent and immoral beliefs and practices.

At this time we come to the examination of the eschatological aspects of a religion which, while having had a personal founder, is not the best obtainable illustration of what was just said regarding religions originating with persons.

**Buddhism**

Buddhism, which had its beginning in India, was born in a spirit of protest against Brahmanism, against its ascetic and generally negative tendencies, something the same as Protestantism began as a revolt against Roman Catholicism. Buddha[4] reacted also against a philosophy of change, just one thing after another, which sug-

[4] Gautama Buddha (567-487 B.C.). The dates of his birth and death are not definitely known, some saying his death occurred in 480 B.C. The founder of Buddhism goes by several names: Gautama, his family name; Sakya-muni, the hermit, or perhaps sage, of the race of Sakya, Sakya being the name of the race to which his family originally belonged; Siddhartha, his personal name, corresponding to what is commonly known as the "Christian name," as distinguished from the family name; Buddha, not a proper name, but rather an official title meaning the "Enlightened One," because of the knowledge which came to him in his experience under the Bo-tree. Bo-tree means "tree of wisdom" and is the name given the sacred fig tree under which Gautama became Buddha, and in Buddhism corresponds in significance to the crescent of Mohammedanism and the cross of Christianity.

gested to him moving in a circle; he could see in this nothing but monotony, and so his heart yearned for something that would be permanent. But he took over from Brahmanism too much that was of a negative character—pessimism, Karma, transmigration—ever to be able to build a satisfactory, constructive system. Then, too, the great spiritual goal of the Buddhist, the Nirvana experience, like the supreme objective of the Brahman, has been too abstract and indefinite to meet the demands of human beings. Some persons may protest this position, saying the Brahman, Buddhist, etc., have had the right idea and people should seek to climb to this high level. This may be true in a measure, but at the same time it should be remembered that any program which makes oneness with Brahmă, or Nirvana, *the one* ultimate objective, will never fully nourish and completely satisfy persons who live in the flesh and whose concepts have grown out of an anthropomorphic soil. Buddha himself lived a faith that was better and more practical than the one he taught. Buddhism has been a missionary religion, though more moral than religious, and in certain periods of its history has emphasized charity, equality of man, progress, welfare of humanity, and only in so far as it has done this has it been successful. But the reader must remember that many centuries rolled between primitive Buddhism and this religion at its highest tide of development. In original Buddhism man was left to work out his own salvation and consequently the hereafter remained indefinite and vague. Buddha himself did not believe in the existence of a soul as such and yet taught its transmigration. To have been consistent he should have denied the latter. His conception of heaven and hell was interwoven with the doctrine of transmigration in such way that these became places or conditions along the migration path in which the person was rewarded or punished, this being de-

termined by the Law of Karma. Nirvana was considered to be the absolute goal and, though not looked upon as a place, corresponded to what is meant by heaven in the Christian religion. As Buddhism developed, and divided, beliefs changed. In the North,—Thibet, China, etc.,—a definite conception of Deity came into being which was absent in the primitive stage. Many Buddhists to-day are looking for another Enlightened One, Buddha Maitreya, who will open up the way of salvation to men and make possible a glorified life in the hereafter.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism,[5] in its conception of the future life, was characterized by features closely resembling the eschatological system of Christianity, which was born about six hundred years later. On the basis of later Zoroastrian writings, which also represent the beliefs of the extant remnants of this faith, there is an individual judgment after death, and the good go to heaven and the bad to hell, the latter being in the middle of the earth. At the last there will be a great resurrection in which all people will participate; they being called forth from their dwelling places, will respond in their original bodies, for this will be a literal resurrection. At this time there will be a final judgment with Ormazd (Ahura Mazda) as the great Judge. Associated with this there will be a great conflagration, which will not happen, however, before Ormazd has sent his Prophet, and through him conversion made possible for mankind. This conflagration will cause a molten stream, through which all beings must pass. To the good it will seem as warm milk, and they will go through it to the mansions of the blessed; the wicked will go to the gulf of Duzahk where

[5] Zoroastrianism, founded by Zoroaster (Zarathustra) (660-583 B.C.). These dates are generally accepted, he being definitely regarded as an historical person. Because of the Mohammedan persecution in the seventh and eighth centuries, Zoroastrians in large numbers left Persia, many of them finally settling in India. To-day, two groups remain,—the Parsis of India and the Ghebers of Persia.

they will burn, but will finally be purified and received by Ormazd into heaven where there will be a great reunion, all having now become immortal and living a spiritual life above the needs of the body. Finally, even hell itself, including the evil one, Ahriman, will be purified by the fire and then darkness will have passed away and light will prevail. From all this a new and permanent world will come, a world which will know no evil.

The early Greeks believed in a future life but their conception was not very definite. They built more around the things of this world. The vagueness was due to the fact that the early Greek did not clearly distinguish between *the personal soul* continuing its existence as such after death and its existence *in general reality,* perhaps lost in something of a divine existence. In their own right only the gods were looked upon as really immortal, this being the significant differentiating factor between them and men. In Homer's *Iliad,* there is presented the idea of the soul being flung into a dismal abode,—Hades:—

Among the Greeks

> "Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring,
> Of woes unnumbered, heavenly goddess sing;
> That wrath which hurled to Pluto's gloomy reign
> The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;
> Whose limbs unburied on the naked shore,
> Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore." [6]

All persons were not consigned to this gloomy abode. In the *Odyssey,* Homer speaks of the Elysian Plain, a place of pleasantness at the end of the world, next to the ocean, to which region heroes and other fortunate souls were taken by the gods, and which journey did not necessarily involve the disembodiment of the soul.[7] This was not looked upon

[6] *Iliad,* Book I, v. 1-6. Translation by Pope.
[7] *Odyssey,* IV, 563 ff.

as a general abiding center for departed souls, but the abode of the favored few, those who were "good" in the eyes of the gods. In Hesiod's *Works and Days* he speaks of the Islands of the Blessed in the same way that Homer does of the Elysium (The Elysian Plain). There is a later and different conception of Elysium presented in the *Æneid* [8] by Virgil (70-19 B.C.), one of the best known of Roman poets. Here it is not a far-away place reserved for the favorites of the gods but a compartment in the underworld inhabited by the spirits of those individuals who have lived good lives. Those whose deeds have been unworthy are hurled into the infinite suffering and anguish of Tartarus.

The Mysteries brought to the Greeks a new assurance of immortality. Persephone returning from the region of the dead, as told in the myth of Demeter and Persephone [9] gave definite hope to others that they too might rise to life after death. The soul in the body was regarded as in a prison house, its existence in the body being a punishment for wrong doings in some previous existence. In this the transmigration idea shows itself. From this suffering the Mysteries promised to their initiates release, assurance of immortality in the hereafter; and at the same time Hades came to be regarded not just as a place for departed souls, but an abode where wrong doers suffered for their sins, the retributive factor thus showing itself. The popularity of the immortality element in the mystery-cults was so great that it must be regarded as the chief influence in bringing about the later conception of the Elysian Plain as represented above.

**The Mysteries**

It was very natural that these changing conceptions

[8] *Æneid*, VI, 541 ff.

[9] Not unlike the Isis and Osiris myth of the Egyptians, and *Ishtar's Descent* of Babylonians and Assyrians, although the last named did not push their myth far enough to give it an immortality interpretation as did the Egyptians and Greeks.

should find expression in the writings of the poets and philosophers, the doctrine of immortality reaching its peak of clearness and definiteness with Plato (427-347 B.C.) who taught the soul's pre- as well as its post-existence. In Plato's belief the influence of the Pythagoreans and the Mysteries is clearly seen, his conception of the soul itself probably being borrowed largely from these sources. In his *Dialogues* much of his teaching is put in the mouth of his beloved master, Socrates, and often it is impossible to know whether the discussions actually took place or constitute a method used by Plato to present his own personal views. It is probably safe to believe that in cases such as these Plato correctly represents Socrates and at the same time is expressing his own opinions regarding the subjects discussed. In these *Dialogues* the soul is represented as imprisoned in the body and desirous of going and being with God where it can enjoy its intended freedom. In *Timæus* the soul is represented as coming from the Supreme Creator and facing the possibility of returning to its "kindred star," or migrating into a lower animal; the soul continues to abide not because of anything inherent in its nature but because the kind willingness of this Creator allows it to do so, thus making its future existence to depend upon the goodness of God. In the *Phædrus* Plato pictures the soul as immortal because it is always in motion and is self-moving; being moved from within it knows no beginning nor ending, and is thus altogether different from the body which is moved from without. In the *Republic* (10th Book) the soul continues to abide because it is able to withstand the negative effects of its own peculiar evil, in this respect being different from the body which succumbs to the ravages of its diseases. In the *Phædo* the soul's immortality rests chiefly upon the fact of the existence and reality of eternal ideas in which it naturally participates. In addition to this, Plato

Plato

believed that the soul's naturally reaching out for another state of being, and the "necessity of retribution," argue for immortality; if the soul were not immortal the wicked would be striking too good a bargain in dying, because in passing out of existence they would not be able to suffer enough for their wrong doings.

In this same *Dialogue* (*Phædo*) Plato makes Socrates to picture a great earth, in the interior of which is a large chasm called Tartarus, the object which we know as the earth being only a hollow in this great earth, the heavenly earth being above. The dead pass on to their judgment and those whose sins are unpardonable, that is, those guilty of sacrilege, murders, etc., are cast into Tartarus, from which they may never expect to be released, receiving a judgment corresponding to their sins. Those who are guilty of wrongs which are pardonable, such as violence to father or mother in moments of anger, followed by repentance, are cast into Tartarus with the hope of getting out at the end of a year. But if at that time they are unable to prevail upon those whom they have wronged to have mercy, then according to the sentence of the judges, they must return to Tartarus until such time as they are able to obtain forgiveness from their former victims. Those who are neither criminal nor innocent, really the indifferent group, find conveyances as best they can to the lake and await the purification of evil, receiving rewards and punishments according to their deeds. The righteous receiving their just reward, make their dwelling place in the upper or heavenly earth, and those who have fully purified themselves with philosophy may expect an existence even better than this.[10] Socrates did not ask that all this should be taken literally but felt it was

[10] According to the interpretation of Plato made by Proclus (410-485) of Constantinople and Alexandria, and later the representative Neo-Platonist of Athens, the soul was thought to receive its judgment somewhere between the earth and the sky.

near enough to real facts to merit the confidence of his hearers.

Socrates

No stronger faith in the reality of the soul and its future existence can be found anywhere than is shown in Plato's *Phædo,* as represented in the death-scene discussion led by Socrates. Here in his stalwart attitude he demonstrated the practicality of the statement in the *Apology* that "no evil can happen to the good man, either in life or after death." His faith showed itself to be a "dying" as well as a "living" faith. His philosophy stood the test of death; he faltered not. Even the jailer was converted to a belief in the genuineness of Socrates' philosophy, and "breaking down," left the presence of his prisoner after really apologizing for being compelled to do his duty as an officer of the law. Socrates comforted his friends, impressing upon them the fact that the real Socrates was not dying, would need no burial; the soul would live on and be much better off when freed from the body.

Naturally the attitude which Socrates assumed toward death raised the question earlier in this *Dialogue* as to why it might not be a good thing to commit suicide, if death is the entrance which admits the soul to a better and greater life. Socrates answered this question by saying that the soul being a prisoner had no right, as such, to open the door and run away; a good man should wait, follow death and not seek to be his own benefactor. Then, too, man is the property of the gods and thus has no right to destroy that which is not his own possession. Socrates' questioners also asked how a person could be so willing to leave this life in which he is ruled by the gods for a life in which he probably would have to take care of himself. Socrates answered this question saying he was going to other gods who were good and wise, into better company than he was leaving behind. From all that was said in this discussion it seems

very certain that while Socrates and Plato had not completely outgrown the inconsistent mythology of that day, they had hold of conceptions which far transcended the crudities of current Greek polytheism.

Epicurus

While belief in immortality was very general among the Greeks, the reader must not think this doctrine had unanimous approval. In their attitude toward this conception the Greeks varied from the staunch position of Socrates and Plato to that of Epicurus (341-270 B.C.) who took a definite stand against the idea of future life. The latter believed the soul to be composed of material atoms, and, as opposed to Socrates, to be perishable; undergoing a disintegrating process at death, annihilation is its inevitable end. Epicurus' attitude was negative not only toward this doctrine but as regarding religion in general. His mother was a priestess in a superstitious religious cult, and in practicing the arts of magic had much to do with turning him away from religion. He hated religion because it seemed to him to make people afraid of death and this fear operated to their disadvantage in trying to get the most out of this life; the mind engaged with these dark and gloomy aspects could not attain to the best in its present existence, so Epicurus aimed to drive the fear of death from the minds of people, this being a feature highly lauded by his followers. Epicureanism then, the staunch enemy of a belief in immortality, naturally encouraged its adherents to get as much enjoyment as possible out of the present life, because death ends all existence; there is no hereafter.

Among the Romans

In turning to the Romans, a people without a mythology, we find the conception of the future life to have been very, very hazy. They took for granted that the souls or ghosts of the dead dwelt below the earth, but the retributive element was a minus quantity in their conception of the hereafter. In the Roman program of re-

ligion funeral occasions and certain periods of the year called for the worship of the Manes, "good" deities of the underworld with whom in later times the shades of the dead were associated, the Manes coming to be considered as ancestral spirits exalted to the level of deities. In addition to this the ancestral ghosts of the departed were believed to become guardians of the household. As suggested above, all the beliefs regarding a future existence were indefinite and abstract and far from being formulated into doctrines or creeds. The permanence and immortality of the gens, a clan or family group, seem to have been more definitely conceived than that of the individual ancestor. As Pythagorean influence and individualism grew, perhaps also influenced by Orphism coming in through the Greek colonies, belief in the immortality of the individual made progress. Cicero, while seemingly doubtful at times as to a future life, seems not only to have lent definite approval to the doctrine on certain occasions but also revealed a yearning for the experiences awaiting him in the next life. He says, "If I am wrong in this, that I believe the souls of men to be immortal, I willingly delude myself; nor do I desire that this mistake in which I take pleasure should be wrested from me as long as I live. But if I, when dead, shall have no consciousness, as some narrow-minded philosophers imagine, I do not fear lest dead philosophers should ridicule this my delusion." [11] Julius Cæsar and the elder Pliny, however, took definite positions against the doctrine of immortality, the former assuming a genuine Epicurean attitude, looking upon death as a release from the torments which burden humanity, while Pliny advocated the belief that a person comes from nothing and at death returns to this same nothingness. The Romans had forsaken the idea of an underworld by the end of the Roman Republic and Hades was

[11] Cicero, *Cato; or An Essay on Old Age.*

transferred to regions above. With the more intelligent, Seneca and Pliny for instance, and with many of the less intelligent, the old idea of fear, phantoms, crossing the Styx, etc., came to be looked upon as spooky stories believed only by children.

In the religion of the ancient Hebrews very little was said about the hereafter. Some students wonder at Moses' silence on this subject, and many reasons have been set forth in the endeavor to explain this fact. With the Hebrews everything seemed to center in this life and they gave little thought to rewards and punishments in addition to what Jehovah gave them here. Early the thought prevailed that the grave was the dwelling place of the dead, but associated with this belief was the conception of a dismal abode in the "nether parts of the earth" to which all spirits went, righteous and unrighteous, even the uncircumcised of the nations round about. The journey to the underworld presupposed the disembodiment of the soul, the only real exceptions to this being in the cases of Enoch and Elijah. The gloomy picture of this dark pit, Sheol, awaiting the dead is presented in Isaiah 14: 9 ff; Ezek. 32: 21 ff. Daniel adds the idea of a resurrection following which there will be reward and punishment. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt, and they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12: 2, 3).

Among the Hebrews

As the Hebrews grew in thought, definite belief in a future life came into being and was given considerable emphasis, influenced possibly by the Greeks and probably by the Zoroastrians of Persia whose eschatological program is found to have been very similar to that of Judaism. In Jesus' time the resurrection of the dead was a much dis-

cussed question, the Pharisees accepting and the Sadducees rejecting the doctrine, the latter preferring to stay by the original Scriptural teaching. Many of these later Hebrew minds found the immortality concept of Plato and the Mysteries to be very acceptable but were unwilling to accept the transmigration idea along with it.

Christianity

Christianity naturally inherited many beliefs and customs from conditions making up the soil out of which it grew, and the doctrine of immortality was no exception to this. It goes without saying that the Christian religion took much from Judaism, and while it is wrong to say with Channing that "immortality is the glorious discovery of Christianity," it does seem true, nevertheless, that in this religion there is to be found a clearer and more pronounced message concerning a blessed immortality than had been taught previous to its birth. This religion, however, does no more than tell a general story, giving no details concerning the future life. Its message is clothed in figurative language, which, if concrete facts are to be set forth, must be interpreted, which means that there is no absolutely definite normative understanding. All definite presentations regarding the conditions of the future life, such as "walking the streets of gold," "feasting in Beulahland," "the land of corn and wine," etc., etc., are puerile and cheaply materialistic. But the fact of immortality, with the intimation that it is surrounded with all that could be desired, too wonderful to be appreciated by human mortals, receives a powerful emphasis in the New Testament. Of course, the best authority here is Jesus, His teaching always being regarded as final by Christians; and nothing in the New Testament supersedes the certainty of His emphasis on immortality presented in John 14: 2, 3: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you, and if

I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." Then in John 10: 27, 28, He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." In I John 3: 2, "Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that, if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." The writer of Hebrews (12: 22-24) says, ". . . but ye are come unto Mt. Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than that of Abel." Paul, the theologian of the New Testament, speaks of being in a strait betwixt living in the flesh and going to be with Christ, "having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better" (Phil. 1: 23). Then in II Cor. 5: 1, "For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens."

It was customary for a long time in the Christian religion to think of heaven as in the sky and hell in the center of the earth, but this conception began to disappear among intelligent people with the advent of the new scientific discoveries and inventions of Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1641), etc., by means of which students came into a fairly good knowledge of what was in the sky and in the center of the earth. And yet it is probably true that the average working conception among Christians to-day is the one traditionally handed down, similar to that of other re-

ligions in the early part of the Christian era. This old conception being materialistic makes heaven a place, while Jesus has taught that the kingdom of heaven is within, representing not a physical, but a spiritual existence, a continuation of this life, the big difference as between this life and the next being that "flesh and blood" with their corruptible associations will have been left behind. Then, too, the old belief that heaven is a resting place where souls dwell at ease in Zion is being exchanged for the conception of heaven which represents it as a condition characterized by progress.

Intermediate State

A few Christians believe in the doctrine of an intermediate state, a stopping place between this life and the ultimate heaven. This belief has been built up on the basis of Scriptural statements such as the following: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23: 43); "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended unto the Father" (John 20: 17), even though it was the third day after His crucifixion and in the meanwhile He had been in Paradise; Christ, "being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (I Peter 3: 18, 19). It is not the general idea here that the intermediate place affords an opportunity for souls to improve their chances for better rewards in the next life, but rather a place for adjustment of the self to its final environment, really a process of development (not moral progress necessarily), a process in which the soul completely sheds the "scales" accumulated in the life of "flesh and blood" and is made ready *to stand in the presence of God.* To use a crude illustration, the drunkard has been completely reformed in character, but his hair is disheveled, his clothes ragged, his body dirty, his general bearing poor; there must be a rearrangement before he will feel at home in

decent society. Roman Catholicism has carried this position further and formulated a doctrine of Purgatory, which teaches that those who have been baptized and yet are not ready for heaven, because of minor sins, are here cleansed and purified for entrance into the final abode. Thus Roman Catholics practice the saying of prayers and sacrifices of mass in behalf of the dead. Parallel with the position of those who believe in an intermediate Paradise and those who do not, are the two different attitudes regarding the judgment of the soul, one view representing a partial judgment followed by a final pronouncement in connection with a general resurrection, the other view suggesting that at death the soul goes immediately to its final reward or punishment. The latter view probably has the larger following in Christian theology.

Purgatory

Before leaving the study of the different conceptions regarding life in the hereafter as found in the great religions of the world and going on to a discussion of immortality, as such, let us pause to review the situation as found in Mohammedanism. In an examination of this religion's eschatological program it is soon seen that there are but few uplifting features characteristic of Islam, and yet the viewpoint of this group is significant because it is of vital concern to nearly one-sixth of the population of the entire globe. But even though this faith warms the hearts of so many devout individuals, it is hardly able to satisfy the desires and needs of a civilized and intelligent people; its rewards and punishments are materialistic to the core and are not only sensuous but brimful of sensuality as well. According to Mohammed there will be a resurrection, for "God will raise again those who are in the grave"; the dead will be raised at a blast of the trumpet, and then comes the judgment. God will introduce those who have believed, and acted righteously, into gardens through

Mohammedanism

which rivers flow; they shall be adorned therein with rich vestures, bracelets of gold and pearls (Koran, Ch. 22). The sincere servants of God shall have delicious fruits in Paradise and gardens of pleasure; "near them shall be virgins of paradise refraining their looks from beholding any besides their spouses, having large black eyes, and resembling the eggs of an ostrich covered with feathers from the dust" (Koran, Ch. 37). "Therein shall receive them beauteous damsels . . . whom no man shall have deflowered before them, neither any genius." "There shall be fruits, palm-trees, and pomegranates . . . agreeable and beauteous damsels. There shall they delight themselves, lying on green cushions and beautiful carpets" (Koran, Ch. 55). But the wicked shall be known by their marks, and shall taste the vengeance of the Lord; they shall be taken by the forelocks, and the feet, and cast into hell (Koran Ch. 55). They shall have garments of fire fitted unto them; boiling water shall be poured on their heads; their bowels shall be dissolved thereby, and also their skins; and they shall be beaten with maces of iron. As often as they shall endeavor to get out of hell, because of the anguish of their torments, they shall be dragged back into the same; and their tormentors shall say unto them, "Taste ye the pain of burning." The only respite the wicked will have in the torment of hell-fire will be the occasional privilege of drinking a mixture of filthy boiling water. (Koran, Chapters 22 and 55.)

## IMMORTALITY AS A DESIRABLE EXPERIENCE

In the foregoing study of the influential religious systems more has been represented than is included simply in the immortality concept, but in any discussion along this line it is around the belief that life represents a continuous stream that all programs having to do with death, judgment, etc., are built. If this belief were taken away there would

be no doctrines, no creeds, regarding final things. In other words, the fundamental fact in eschatology, and significant in all religions, is the idea of a life that is enduring, endless, deathless; a life that is exempt from annihilation, oblivion, death. Among all peoples an interest in the immortality of the soul has shown itself. Occasionally a minor group is said to be an exception to this general rule, but if all facts were known in these obscure cases, probably the same yearning for everlastingness would be found to exist. The desire for immortality may find itself running out into different molds according to the beliefs which happen to prevail in the environment, which means that there will be different theories of life after physical death.

The kind of immortality which is most desirable and which represents the aspirations of the average person is that in which every element and attribute of personality is conserved in the hereafter in such way as to continue the full identity of the individual. Much has been said about the "immortality of influence" based upon George Eliot's "O May I Join the Choir Invisible":—

Immortality of Influence

O, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man
So we inherit that sweet purity

For which we struggled, failed, agonized,
With widening retrospect that bred despair
. . . . . .
That better self shall live till human time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread forever.

This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us to strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
. . . . . .
So I shall join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

This kind of "living on," which Professor Wright calls "social or spiritual immortality," hardly concerns us in this chapter. Of course no one doubts that the influence of a person's life lives on long after his body has given up its spirit, this being true of Moses, Socrates, Old Testament prophets, Paul, Washington, Lincoln, and a countless number of others. And even though in this influence they may live larger lives than when they were in the flesh, this is not what is meant when we speak of immortality. Then, too, some students refer to "biological immortality," that is, immortality through heredity. Neither will any one question this as a fact because it is well known that in many cases fathers and mothers live in their children, this being true because offspring inherit physical and mental traits from their parents, and even their grandparents. This holds good in such a universal way that "like father, like son" has come to be a common expression; sayings such as these root themselves in facts, not fancies. But even so, these types of continued living are without the

Biological Immortality

scope of our discussion because they do not come within the category of what is meant by the immortality of the soul, even though given the broadest interpretation.

The average individual desires a personal immortality, especially so if his supernatural agency or agencies, is personal; and in all cases the most desirable state of future existence must provide for the conservation of the positive elements of the individual's character. In attempting an analysis of this doctrine it is to be expected that differences of opinion will reveal themselves. Some persons may express their belief in an "immortality in God," which, if it means that the soul is to be absorbed and lost in the great Spirit, will be satisfactory only to those who are pantheistically inclined. This attitude may well provide for the ultimate realizations of those who seek to become one with Brahmă, or possibly those who seek the Nirvana experience, but will not do quite so well for an adherent of the Christian religion. But if "immortality in God" means that individual consciousness will be continued, separate and distinct, in the great sea of Consciousness, and yet a definite part of this Sea, something like the Gulf Stream in the Atlantic, then probably this position may be said to represent the belief of the average thoughtful Christian.

Then, too, one does not proceed very far before he clearly sees that the gregarious instinct has been active in the formulation of this doctrine because the immortality concept is decidedly social, not individualistic; in the next life there is to be a world of selves, and companionships denied satisfaction here will find it in the hereafter. The standard conception in Christian theology depicts the hereafter as a kingdom of individual souls, as individual units separate unto themselves; and yet a careful consideration of this problem in the light of Christian teaching seems to point to that interpretation which

**Immortality, a Social Idea**

says that while "we shall know as we are known" it is at the same time *in God* that satisfactions and aspirations are fully realized, as "spirits" become identified with the supreme Spirit. This view represents a world of selves in eternity, but each self constituting a part of God's own self. From now on in this chapter it is in the sense of personal immortality that I shall use the term.

## MODERN ATTITUDE TOWARD IMMORTALITY

Before proceeding with a study of the grounds for and against this fundamental doctrine, let us pause to examine the attitude of people to-day toward this belief and seek the reasons why there has been a decided slump in interest, it being a generally accepted fact that the immortality of the soul does not hold the conspicuous place in the thought of people in recent times which it did years ago. This does not mean that there has been a growing disbelief, but simply a lack of former interest, for which there are real causes. It is very common when writing on this subject to refer to Professor Leuba's investigation conducted about ten years ago, as reported in his book, *The Belief in God and Immortality*. In response to questionnaires sent out to a large number of scientists representing different fields of research, it was found that the whole number of respondents could be divided into three groups, one-third expressing a belief in personal immortality, one-third disbelieving, and the remaining per cent. in doubt. It was seen that among the responses the percentage of psychologists believing in immortality ran lower than the other scientists, a few less than one-fifth their number believing in it, this being true, probably, because the students in this field are brought into closer contact with the activities of the mind, which tends to reduce mental phenomena to the level of the commonplace, which is not so much the case with the other scientists.

This report says in substance that two-thirds of those responding did not rule out belief in the immortality of the soul, which tends to support rather than contradict the assertion that there is sufficient evidence to justify the assumption that the majority of scientists desire and believe in an endless life. The *naïve* attitude, as over against that of the scientist, invariably suggests belief in a future existence, although this may not find convincing expression in everyday life.

The question naturally arising at this time is, Why has an interest in the future life been lagging in recent years? To get the first reason which will be suggested it is necessary to go back to the beginning of the Renaissance (1453-1690) and follow the stream of individualism as it widens, and finally find students generally looking "within" for the secret of reality, which was bound to result in a powerful emphasis on the significance of the individual. With this must be associated the fact that this new individual found himself in a new world, occasioned by the discovery of America, new route to the East, etc., giving the earth a different geographical aspect; also the birth of the new scientific movement, headed by Copernicus (1473-1543), Bacon (1561-1626), Galileo (1564-1641), Kepler (1571-1630), Newton (1642-1722), etc., which, contributing new discoveries and inventions, and taking science out of the hands of theology, showed this to be a bigger and more wonderful universe than man had ever dreamed it to be. All this naturally resulted eventually in an emphasis on the worth whileness of this life and world. The whole situation presented a challenge to man and he began to respond, and his reaction gathering momentum has probably reached its climax in our own day. Only one hundred years ago, and perhaps even fifty, the chief ambition of the ma-

**Why Interest in Immortality Has Lagged**

**(1) A New Emphasis on the Individual and This Life**

jority of persons was to be ready for heaven, while in recent years the decided purpose seems to be to get ready, not to die but to live, and make the most out of life. This does not mean a decreased belief in the hereafter but an increased confidence in the present life. This being true, people have less time to meditate on facts beyond the grave and less interest in its life. Every age has its dominant ideas around which its people build, shaping up as ideals, positive and negative, toward which they look and move. Generally speaking, the latter part of the Middle Ages was decidedly *theo-centric,* which finally gave way to the new *homo-centric* and *cosmo-centric* movements, and as the latter gained in influence, the God-idea was crowded out from the center, toward the periphery of thought-life, and along with it the immortality concept. Right now a process of readjustment seems to be going on, and many persons are teaching a wholesome program which says the God-idea finds its highest and greatest significance when representing Him, not far away in the skies, but in man and in the world, and the best way to express belief in and assure one's self of the advantages of immortality, is to make this life a sure foundation upon which the life in the hereafter can stand. This bespeaks a new and more reasonable attitude toward immortality.

(2) Current Materialistic Tendency

Another reason why interest in the future life lags to-day is to be found in the fact that a preponderance of thought in recent years has run out along materialistic lines; the most challenging problems for many persons are found in economic, industrial, and political situations. Science makes a contribution to this tendency in the fact that it deals for the most part with material phenomena, only that material about which it can hope to be certain. The strict empirical student allows himself but small opportunity for the cultivation of the finer

values. The interests of science constitute an influential factor because science is very popular to-day; every one aims to be scientific; the youth in his teens, even the man on the street is likely to want to know what science has to say about a particular problem. This spirit has become contagious and the result is an unconscious swing toward materialism. This is not a criticism of science necessarily, but of the methods of the many who demand that a basis of evaluation be worked out in terms of a materialistic measuring-stick. This tendency of thought and interest constitutes such a strong current in the general stream of life in America and elsewhere that many people have drifted into indifference and even skepticism regarding not only immortality but other fundamental religious concepts as well. It has been said of old that man cannot serve God and mammon, and it seems many have decided in favor of the latter. A Christian educator who has spent many years in China, in the course of a recent lecture, reported a conversation which he had had with a prominent Chinese official. In substance the Chinese said to this American citizen, "I am glad my skin is not white and that I belong to the yellow race. The white delegates at our recent international conference showed but little interest in the moral and spiritual uplift of humanity, but instead, their judgments were determined and formulated on the basis of mandates, oil leases, tobacco monopolies," etc. And in saying this he was not trying in any way to idealize China or the Chinese. This negative tendency is showing itself in an attempted exploitation and a feeling of race superiority against which the East rebels, and justifiably so, the East holding in contempt the inconsistency and hypocrisy of a program which tries to present a higher civilization and religion, besmirched with these unchristian elements. So the leaders in the East are now saying to the West, "We accept your Christ but not your

Christianity," and thus they are taking a stand against the very things which Jesus himself denounced. Several years ago a prominent churchman said to an American audience, "As I come to these shores from the idealism of India, I am almost stifled by the materialistic atmosphere of America." Some one replies to this, "Let him stay in India," but that is the cry of ignorance and injustice; intelligent loyalty to higher truths says, "Let us make it better." The reader must not interpret the situation too pessimistically, however, because even though the average scientist by the very nature of his work is mostly concerned about physical things, this does not necessarily say that he is irreligious; and not all people are most interested in serving mammon. But there is a sufficient amount of this to color the whole stream of life and it does make a dark picture for the person of high ideals; and if the facts in the foregoing mean anything, they surely signify that an interest in the future life, fundamental among Christian concepts, would naturally have a hard time keeping alive and active in the West at the present time.

(3) Immortality as Affected by Methods of Disposing of Bodies of the Dead

Another obstacle should be mentioned here which has always operated against a distinct and impressive regard for immortality in the Christian religion, although it cannot be held responsible for the modern lack of emphasis, because it is as old as Christianity itself. I refer here to the general method in the Christian religion of disposing of the bodies of the dead, as over against the prevailing custom among the Hindus. With the Hindu the body is burned a short time after death and the ashes carried away by the river. Those left behind know that nothing material remains, and believing the loved one still exists, they are compelled to think in terms of the invisible, immortal soul; there is nothing else for them to build around in their thought. Not

so, according to the prevailing Christian custom where the body is placed in a grave. Friends visit the place of burial from time to time for meditation, place flowers upon the grave, and are anxious in every way possible to honor the body's resting place, which is very commendable. And yet the fact must not be overlooked that the whole "Cult of the Tomb" originated in the primitive belief that the person in some strange way had his residence in the grave. All these practices tend to continue the feeling that the departed is in the grave, and thus also to encourage those left behind to think of the person as he was in the flesh, which impedes, on the part of the living, the full realization of immortality for the departed soul.

Burial of the Dead

Not just because it becomes a negative factor in the immortality program, but also because of sanitation, economic difficulties, and the possibility of burial alive—although modern methods of embalming may take care of this last objection—burial in the earth, inhumation, seems to be a very unfortunate method of disposing of the body, appealing to some persons as very, very crude. Etymologically, the word "burial" means "to hide in the ground" and has come from the very primitive practice of placing the dead in trenches, or crevices, or perhaps on the ground with a little dirt raised over the body, the purpose being to hide the corpse from the sight of the living. To those peoples who do not bury their dead, this custom is just as unrefined as the practice represented in the "Towers of Silence," the big difference being that in the latter case the disposition of the flesh takes place above the surface while in the former, natural disintegration and other attacks upon the body take place under the ground. Of the different methods of burial—in the earth, caves, artificial tombs—Christianity has generally followed the crudest, namely, burial in the earth. Even though the "real person"

is not interred, a truth which old Socrates taught his friends, burial seems to be an unnatural method, because it suggests restraint, imprisonment, a pent-up-ness, against which all Nature rebels. It has been found in history that the methods of disposal have been determined by physical conditions, such as the kind of soil, scarcity or abundance of fuel, etc., also religious beliefs, the latter often influenced by the former. Right in line with this historical fact, the mausoleum is growing in popularity, but better still is the noticeable tendency to-day toward cremation. Fire has always been regarded as a method of purification and seems to be the natural way of disposing of what is left after the soul moves on. Because of the belief in the resurrection of the physical body, and not because the Hebrews had buried in sepulchres—for Christians were not particularly attached to Jewish customs—early Christians turned their backs upon cremation as generally practiced among the Romans (and common among the ancient Greeks) and adopted the practice of burying the dead. And so a practice lives to-day, having originated, as far as Christianity is concerned, in a belief which has long been forsaken by intelligent people, —physical resurrection,—and it continues to live chiefly because of the shackles of traditional customs, thus lending testimony to the generally accepted fact that religious customs change slowly, too slowly sometimes, surely more so than religious beliefs. The reader will bear in mind that this position is taken here for reasons other than the fact that methods of disposing of the dead influence the attitude toward the immortality concept. Also, while the method of taking care of the body after death may aid or retard an emphasis on the future life, it is not an absolutely determining factor, because it will be remembered that the custom of burning the body to ashes (incineration) was practiced in Italy since a very early day and became general in Rome,

and yet this did not guarantee to the Romans a clear immortality concept.

## ARGUMENTS CONCERNING IMMORTALITY

In a study of immortality it is soon realized that there are things which are said against it as a reality as well as arguments in its favor. First, let us consider a possible psychological explanation of immortality which may be used as partial proof against it. According to this explanation the belief in a future existence of the soul may be looked upon as the result of the activity of the fear instinct. It is an unquestioned fact that the average person is afraid of death; man looks upon it as a foe, the last enemy to be overcome. All higher life is acquainted with fear, but the type occasioned by the thought of death is more complex and characterized by an intensity which animals other than man, not being able to see beyond the immediate present, do not experience. People shrink at the thought of their own decease, some even holding it in horror. There probably are fundamental reasons why all life rebels against extinction, but the fear of death on the part of man is all that is of concern here, this fear being due chiefly to the fact that death opens the door into an unknown realm and people are always more or less fearful of the mysterious unknown, which is beyond their control, especially when it involves their very being. It is common to find those who are afraid in the darkness of the night, simply because they cannot see and thus do not know for sure what makes up the immediate environment. When feared phenomena come within the range of understanding, the fear disappears. In dealing with death we meet a stubborn fact which has never divulged its secrets; there is no experiential evidence whatsoever regarding the Beyond,

Arguments Against Immortality

(1) Psychological Explanation as an Argument Against Immortality

and consequently the fear of death continues to abide. It has already been pointed out that fear is instinctive, and just as this is a general fact, so there is a universal tendency, surely among sentient beings at least, to seek protection from the object of fear, the subject fearing seeking this protection by putting something between itself and the thing feared. For instance, when children are frightened they may run behind the house, even though curiosity urges them afterwards to peek around the corner; when some object of fear presents itself, the little child gets on the other side of the parent. If we imagine these experiences of the child to be the first of their kind, then these can be regarded as cases of genuinely instinctive or primary fear, this being the type which is most pertinent here, although all secondary or reasoned fear must also be looked upon as having an instinctive basis. Many illustrations could be offered showing conclusively the reality of the principle that when afraid a person, and animal as well, endeavors, if possible, to put something between itself and the danger; and in so far as the subject is successful in doing this, to that extent, the tension of the fear state is relieved, which means the disappearance of the disagreeable feeling. I remember, as a boy, watching a youth as he was holding his horse, attached to a buggy, when a train pulled into the station, the engine stopping right opposite him. He was on the outside and the horse in its fear was lifting him off his feet as he tried to hold and calm the frightened animal. A man of matured experience happened to come along and suggested the advice, "Young man, get between the animal and the danger." The suggestion was applied and immediately the horse began to lose its fear of the chugging engine; it felt protected. If left to itself, of course the animal would have handled the case in another way, but the principle would have been the same; it would have put something between itself and the danger.

And so, the fear of death being universal, and it being natural to put something between the subject fearing and the object feared, the immortality idea may be just a protection which humanity, through the ages, not knowing what else to do, has constructed between itself and possible extinction. This being its seeming origin, immortality is no more than a concept, and has no corresponding objective reality, the evolution of this concept being possibly as follows: Very early, man saw that every one, great and small, went to that strange land from which no traveler e'er returned, and he shrank from the thought of it. As he thus faced the phenomenon of death, he made simple analyses, comparisons, abstractions, as best he could, and after shaking his head in hopeless dread, he paused in wonder, then in doubt, the idea finally occurring to him that possibly it was not true that man must die; this conception gained momentum and eventually the idea of an endless life evolved, an imaginary object posited between himself and the object of his greatest fear, death, which meant ultimately a full-fledged immortality concept. This program seemingly worked, not that it took away fear but it dulled its biting edge, and so it has been treated as an objective reality even though it is really altogether subjective.

There is no doubt that this argument is right in saying the immortality idea has decreased the fear of death, in that it constitutes itself an object between fearing and feared, taking away in a certain measure the stinging dread of death. But whether there is sufficient foundation here to justify the acceptance of this as a satisfactory explanation of the origin of belief in a future life, is another question. It seems, as will be shown later in a psychological argument for immortality, that there are psychological facts which offset the claims of this argument, and tend to confirm belief in this doctrine as a fact.

The next objection to a belief in a personal existence in a future life is presented under the name rationalistic argument. It says if new souls are continually being born, a process that has been going on through the ages, and if when persons die these souls continue their existence in another world, then surely the time will come when the capacity of the abiding place or places will be exhausted, and thus unable to handle the overcrowded situation. This seems reasonable if one stops to think of the congested centers of the earth, where people are crowded together and an intensive cultivation of the soil is necessary in order to eke out a miserable existence; and if there are too many at any time, they simply die. On the basis of this, try to imagine the innumerable hosts of heaven with the *ever increasing numbers*. This is the perplexing predicament involved in a belief in the immortality of the soul. In addition to this seemingly insurmountable difficulty, there is a further problem, namely, the inconceivability of a sufficient variety of personalities to accommodate these countless hosts of souls. Facing these facts, the whole immortality program seems impractical and unreasonable.

(2) Rationalistic Argument Against Immortality

If this argument were taken seriously, it could easily be met by setting forth the current and popular belief in the infinity of space, because if space is infinite, and much modern evidence points this way, there is no danger whatsoever of overcrowding in eternity. The better way to meet this argument, however, is to remind the advocate of this position that he assumes the existence of souls. If he has a materialistic soul in mind, then his objections will be met in the answer to the materialistic argument. But it is assumed here that he is not a materialist, and if not, then soul must be interpreted as spiritual. This being true, the idea of heaven being overcrowded with souls vanishes, because it

is generally accepted that spirit does not occupy space. As far as the statement is concerned which says the immortality program makes possible such a large number that differences between some of the souls are inconceivable, this is met in the common analogy found in the everyday material world. Of all the billions and billions of leaves in the great forest, we know that every one has its particularity and is different from every other one. If this is not only conceivable but an actual fact, in this physical universe, then on this basis it is possible and reasonable to accept belief in the existence of an infinite variety of personalities in eternity.

(3) Materialistic Argument Against Immortality

The materialistic argument against immortality which will be considered next, is based on the assumption that materialism is the correct theory of reality. This position assumes that the mind is a by-product of the body and as such is dependent thereupon, and this being true, there could be no continued life of the soul after that upon which it depends has passed away. The materialist bolsters up his assumption of the supremacy of the body by saying that the physiological factors condition the whole mental life, and then proceeds to show that a blow on the head, narcotic drugs, fatigue, in fact any physical activity has its corresponding effect upon the person's mental condition. He goes even further and asserts that not only is thought dependent upon the brain but special types of thought are related to special parts of the brain. The conclusion then is, if the mind's relation to the body is one of such dependence, that with the decomposition of the body, the disintegration of the brain, continued consciousness would be impossible, thus no immortality of the soul.

The materialistic argument against a future life corresponds in worth to the materialistic argument for reality;

[illegible] "Dependence of thought on a material brain," said John Stuart Mill, "is an empiric fact, but this does not mean that it is a metaphysical necessity."

they stand or fall together. It is not in order here to answer this argument for the supremacy of matter, but it can and should be said in passing that everything which was suggested above in favor of matter as reality can be reversed in favor of the supremacy of mind or spirit. This argument is usually looked upon as the scientific statement against immortality, and thus should be carefully considered here, and answered, if possible. Let us begin by accepting the physiological psychologist's statement that thought is a function of the brain, which according to the materialistic scientist seems to preclude the possibility of the immortality of the soul. But does it? William James in his Ingersoll lecture, *Human Immortality,* has given the classic answer to this position in science. He raises and answers the question as to whether the acceptance of thought as a function of the brain necessarily negatives the possibility of belief in personal existence in a future life. Does body or brain have within itself the faculty of bringing about results? Let us put the question this way, Is the brain's relation to thought the same as the tea-kettle to steam or the electrical apparatus to light? If this is the case, then, says James, its function is productive. The question that comes up at this time is whether it is altogether necessary, when thinking of thought as a function of the brain, to take for granted that it is a productive function which the brain performs. If so, then this would say that the brain produces thought, just the same as the waterfall engenders power or the tea-kettle produces steam, and in this case there could be no such thing as consciousness after the disintegration of the brain at death. But productive function is not the only one which science knows in the physical world. There is the releasing or permissive function such as the trigger of a crossbow which is the means of releasing the string and thus allowing the bow to assume its original shape. Then, too,

there is the transmissive function as in the case of a prism, colored glass, or the keys of an organ. A strong light may send its rays through the stained glass window, the glass being simply an instrument of transmission of the light's rays and in no sense necessary to the existence of the light. The keys of the organ perform a transmissive function in that they open the pipes and let the air escape. So James says that in considering thought as a function of the brain, it is not necessary to think of productive function only; it is perfectly in order to allow for permissive or transmissive function, James believing that the transmissive interpretation fits better into the general scheme of things—for instance, the credible, strange phenomena reported by psychical research. Let us imagine a veil of physical phenomena "hiding and keeping back the world of genuine realities." [12] And then remember that "idealistic philosophy declares the whole world of natural experience, as we get it, to be but a time-mask, shattering or refracting the one infinite thought which is the sole reality into those millions of finite streams of consciousness known to us as our private selves." [13] Beams of light shine through with varying success, according to whether the veil is opaque or thin. "Admit now that our brains are such thin and half-transparent places in the veil. What will happen? Why, as the white radiance comes through the dome, with all sorts of staining and distortion imprinted on it by the glass, or as the air now comes through my glottis, determined and limited in its force and quality of its vibrations by the peculiarities of those vocal cords which form its gate of egress and shape it into my personal voice, even so the genuine matter of reality, the life of souls as it is in its fullness, will break through our several brains

[12] James, *Human Immortality*, p. 15. Courtesy of Houghton Mifflin Company.
[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 16.

into this world in all sorts of restricted forms and with all the imperfections and queernesses that characterize our finite individualities here below. According to the state in which the brain finds itself, the barrier of its obstructiveness may also be supposed to rise or fall. It sinks so low that a comparative flood of spiritual energy passes over. At other times, only such occasional waves of thought as heavy sleep permits gets by, and when finally a brain stops acting altogether, or decays, that special stream of consciousness which is subserved will vanish entirely from this natural world. But this sphere of being that supplied the consciousness would still be intact; and in that more real world with which, even whilst here, it was continuous, the consciousness might in ways unknown to us, continue still." [14] The transmissive theory then would recognize the mind or soul as an independent entity using the brain as an organ of transmission, but not dependent upon the brain for its very existence as the materialist advocates.

Kant

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in his *Critique of Pure Reason,* more than one hundred years earlier than James, expressed himself as favorable to the idea of the immaterial soul's existence and independence of the body. He looked upon the body under the present arrangement of existence as a phenomenon to which all sensibility and thought are related, and did not believe experience had proved that the condition of the mental faculties was determined by physiological changes in the body. His view is found to be similar to that of James, particularly in the rejection of the "productive function" theory. With Kant, "the separation of soul and body forms the conclusion of the sensuous exercise of our power of cognition, and the beginning of the intellectual. The body would, in this view of the question, be regarded, not as the cause of thought, but merely as its restrictive condition, as promotive

[14] James, *Human Immortality,* pp. 16-18.

of the sensuous and animal, but as a hindrance to the pure and spiritual life; and the dependence of the animal life on the condition of the body would not prove that the whole life of man was also dependent on the state of the organism." [15] In this position Kant seems to show the effects of Socratic and Platonic influence.

Schiller

The transmission theory is ably set forth by F. C. S. Schiller, the outstanding English pragmatist, in his *Riddles of the Sphinx,* which possibly greatly influenced James' attitude. In this treatment Professor Schiller follows the lead of Kant in representing the limiting, restricting tendency of matter in relation to consciousness. He feels that this position fully answers the claims of materialism, which has put "the cart before the horse." There is unquestionably a connection between matter and consciousness, but there are no facts to show that matter produces consciousness, but instead restricts it; it really seems to be used by consciousness. If as a result of an injury to the brain a person loses consciousness, it is just as reasonable to say that the instrument by means of which consciousness hitherto has manifested itself has been impaired as it would be to say consciousness has been destroyed along with the injury to the brain. This is supported by the fact that very often faculties which are lost as a result of injury to the brain are later recovered; not necessarily because the injured area has improved but seemingly because consciousness has succeeded in reorganizing and using other parts of the brain, in an effort to express itself.

Bergson

The able French philosopher Henri Bergson in *Matter and Memory* (1896) and later in his *Creative Evolution* (1910) presents a conception similar to James' transmission theory. Here the brain is regarded as an instrument of analysis when on the receiving end and an

[15] Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason,* p. 473. Translation by J. M. D. Meiklejohn.

instrument of selection when executing movements, in both cases being limited to transmissive and divisive responsibilities; the brain really is something like "central" in a telephone system, its work being to allow or disallow communication, in no case adding anything to the situation.[16] With Bergson, then, matter is something like a machine which is used as a means and not an end in itself. On the other hand, consciousness is a free, creative force which, as it endeavors to accomplish its purposes, organizes and uses matter as its tool.

McDougall

Wm. McDougall (*Body and Mind*) takes the position that there are psychological phenomena which can be explained only by a soul interacting with the body, his conception of soul corresponding in significance to the "vital impetus" of Bergson and the "entelechy" of Hans Driesch. In this he clearly lends his support to a belief in the separate and independent existence of the soul.

Ward

James Ward, the eminent English psychologist and philosopher, gives additional weight to the foregoing positions which constitute the answer to the materialistic argument against the immortality of the soul, in ably representing the hypothesis that the present embodiment of the soul is not necessarily the only possible one. Even though "any continuity of life with no continuity of either organism or environment seems quite inconceivable," yet "there is nothing in our present knowledge to show that there cannot be any other mode of embodiment than that with which we are here familiar, and that we have not manifold other relations with our environment besides those which the organism as we know it is supposed to explain." [17] Scientific knowledge is so limited regarding the interaction of body and mind

[16] Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, pp. 19, 20.
[17] Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 399. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

that there is no objection whatsoever to the assumption that "in the course of this life the nervous system by its ultimate habitudes should frame a finer organization, and that this in the moment and act of death should be disentangled from the coarser frame." [18] "Or, more likely, it may be as Bonnet and the younger Fichte supposed, that within the changeable 'external body' there is from the first an 'inner body' that shapes it and outlasts it." [19]

It would seem clear from the foregoing that the materialist is in no position to assume the negative attitude which says the immortality of the soul is scientifically impossible; he does not even have the facts which enable him to say it is scientifically unlikely. While this doctrine cannot be empirically proved to be a fact there is good reason to believe it is scientifically possible, and the person who assumes this favorable attitude need have no fear of being out of company with the best of modern thought. At first, Professor James was under the impression that much dependable material against immortality was available but when deliberately trying to locate this material, found to his surprise that it was very difficult to find any statements denying immortality on physiological grounds.

At this time I shall present several arguments in favor of the immortality of the soul, the first one being called the psychological argument. Here the starting place is the mental attitude of the individual, and he being a part of the general program of Nature must be looked upon as having some of its secrets locked up within himself. That is, the way man naturally feels about this matter must be regarded as significant, and beginning "within" makes the most depend-

Arguments for Immortality

(1) Psychological Argument

[18] W. Cyples, *An Inquiry Into the Process of Human Experience*, p. 431. Quoted from Ward's *Realm of Ends*, p. 400.
[19] Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 400.

able point of departure. Too many positions have been built up by beginning with general assumptions related to phenomena in the objective world, overlooking the fact that they are mere hypotheses which have never been verified in any way, then proceeding to dogmatic attitudes on the basis of these unverified interpretations, which eventually means useless controversies, because so many people are doing the same thing. Persons know themselves better than other phenomena and it is fairly safe to depend upon this knowledge, that is, in a genuinely sane situation. So let us begin with the self, something as did Descartes, ignoring for the time being everything about us, and accepting the self as reality. But some one says, "I must see, hear, handle, before I can accept anything as a fact"; and it is right here that the unyielding empiricist forgets the many times that he has been mistaken when he thought he saw or heard something, the mistake being due not necessarily to a false report of the senses, but to the way the machinery handled the material given him through sensations. The point here is, sense data do not represent an absolutely dependable source of knowledge, and often it is necessary to look elsewhere. Realizing that the problem of immortality is not to be solved over this empirical route, and not altogether by arguments for that matter, it is better to listen to the voice within the self, which speaks for Nature, the latter representing in a more general way the larger Voice, and thus reach more dependable conclusions. What is the "soul's" own answer to the question of its immortality? Its attitude is positive and definite; it desires, it yearns, it strives to live. "He who reads his bosom, reads immortal life." This is a deep fundamental reaching out, springing from the depths of a normal person's mental life; it is the natural life crying out; it is instinctive. The psychological

explanation of and argument against immortality on the basis of the activity of the fear instinct, making the desire for an endless life an acquired tendency, is superseded here by this conception which makes the propensity toward immortality to be a *natural* yearning of the soul for continued existence, associated with which is a deep-seated mental struggle to answer "yes," assuredly, to a generally accepted truth, something like the striving of a dumb person for articulateness. The premises in this case stand upon more solid foundations. In the review of the eschatological conceptions of different peoples it was found that all believed in a hereafter, and the majority intensely desired it, the degree of desire naturally being determined by the ideas of the next life, some conceptions being so gloomy as to dull the edge of desire. But in every case the spark was present, ready to be encouraged by a more intelligent environment. "The monuments of the nations are all protests against nothingness after death; so are statues and inscriptions; so is history." [20] So of all the facts in Nature, one note rises high,—the desire for immortality. Does Nature make mistakes? Not many. Are Nature's methods usually perfect? It seems so. This being true, in the creative program, right at its very heart, there being an intense desire for enduring life, Nature has blundered seriously if having caused its creatures to envisage a goal, even though dimly, and inspired them with an intense desire to reach after it, and then failed to arrange for the possibility of its realization. It would be an unbalanced, an unfinished program which would say, "Get on your marks, get set," and had made no provision to "go." And of all objects in Nature's great program the one representing the crowning work of the creative process,—human personality,—is the one logically expected

[20] Lew Wallace, *Ben Hur*, Bk. VII, Ch. 3.

to reach this final objective. It would seem that the immortality of the soul is the only fitting "capsheaf" which will go with the plan of foundation and superstructure which the Genius of creation has conceived and is executing; and at the present stage of understanding there is no justification for believing that this significant provision has been overlooked by Nature.

(2) Rationalistic Argument Based on the Indestructibility of Matter

The next argument hinges everything on the indestructibility of so-called matter, a fact which is doubted by no one. The law of the conservation of energy says the energy in the physical series is never increased nor diminished; the different forms of energy may interchange, but do not disappear. Electrons and atoms may show themselves in liquids, gases, solids, perhaps in combinations representing animal forms, plants, etc., but the ultimate energy cannot be destroyed; that is unthinkable. The principle involved here is in part the one anticipated by old Empedocles centuries before Christ: "There is no coming into Being of aught that perishes, nor any end for it in baneful death, but only a mingling and a separation of what has been mingled." It is not a case of transformation of the small particles of matter, just a transposition. Matter then in its last analysis is conserved in quantity; it is imperishable. And if the indestructibility of matter is a law in the universe of material things, if everything points to the continued existence of so-called physical energy, how much more would this seem to be true of spirit? Shall the crude abide and the highly developed, the refined, perish? Shall the material fashioned by the workman abide, and the workman pass off the stage of existence? Is the pottery blessed with imperishable qualities, and the potter left to die? This would seem to be unnatural and unreasonable in a world characterized by an unfailing regularity and uniformity.

Can it be so?
Matter immortal, and shall spirit die?
Above the noble shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else survives,
No resurrection know? Shall man alone,
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileged than the grain on which he feeds? [21]

(3) Moral Argument

There are those who believe that the best argument for the immortality of the soul finds its premises in the realm of moral life. Hastings Rashdall is a good representative of this group, who say the moral argument is the true one for immortality, he taking very little stock in metaphysical proofs. His argument roots itself in the validity of our moral judgments; in fact, Dean Rashdall says no argument for existence in a future life can be built up apart from a proper consideration of the moral consciousness and its judgments. Why are human judgments as to what is right and wrong not just as dependable as these judgments anywhere else? And if moral judgments are valid for reality it means something when the moral consciousness affirms that with such a being as man living in such a world as this is, nothing less than immortality ought to be; he should have a future existence. It should be this way because there are so many in this life who are shut out of pleasure, who know pain for the most part. In cases like this would life be worth living if this were all? Dean Rashdall continues, "When I ask myself whether the good that is realized in this transitory existence (if this were all) is really worth all the pain that it costs, I begin to have doubts. . . . Is the good that is produced really worth the misery, the ugliness, the sin which

[21] Young, *Night Thoughts*. Night VI. Line 701.

it has cost?" [22] He sees nothing in the world's history up to the present time which is sufficiently good to counterbalance the evil that exists, and, at the present rate of going, there is no good reason for the anticipation of a better proportion of positive values. In fact he would be willing to press the button and stop the whole present program of life rather than take responsibility for allowing things to go on as at present; and he says he would have been more ready to do this in the more primitive stages of the world's existence. But despite all this, the morally good man ought to be happy, not in the light of rewards and punishments, but because it is naturally *right;* if he is not happy no one can hope to be. "There is only one way in which the good realized in these years of earthly life can be supposed adequately to outweigh evil; and that is to look upon earthly life as but a part, a preliminary part, a relatively short stage in the development of souls which have a long period of development and vast possibilities of increasingly valuable experience open to them after they have been delivered from the bodily organisms which determine, and which limit, their present capacities for action and for enjoyment." [23] In summing up, Dean Rashdall says, "The true ground of the ethical demand for immortality lies in the unrealized capacities of human nature." [24]

There is just one criticism which it seems necessary to make of this splendid lecture, namely, the unjustifiable pessimistic note that is sounded, which is not necessary, seemingly, in the moral argument for immortality. The difference between this and an out-and-out pessimism is that the

[22] Rashdall, *King's College Lectures on Immortality,* pp. 96, 97. This and the following quotations from this book by permission of The Macmillan Company.
[23] *Ibid.,* pp. 99, 100.
[24] *Ibid.,* p. 107.

genuine pessimist seeing so much that is wrong in this world concludes that another life would not justify itself, while Dean Rashdall holds out the idea that a hereafter is needed, and that it is in this way that the ills of this present existence will be outweighed. Many students will disagree with the position taken in this lecture which says that the good has such a poor chance in the present régime that it would be better to push the button than assume responsibility for the present situation; and also as the argument moves from this to the assumption that God feels the same way about it. This procedure seems to make the proof depend somewhat upon pessimistic and very questionable premises, and, if this criticism be just, may lead to conclusions which, though valid, are possibly untrue. The argument, in my opinion, would be more convincing if negative values were not given such a prominent place and the possible unfolding of the good were stressed more, as Dean Rashdall does in the summing up of his thesis.

Kant

In his *Critique of Pure Reason* Kant denied a *knowledge* of immortality, along with God and freedom, in order to make room for faith, and could see no good reason why the existence of the soul might not be ended, but in the *Critique of Practical Reason* he shows a different attitude, and here represents the immortality of the soul as a postulate, a proposition which cannot be theoretically proved but the validity of which reason demands as a practical necessity. According to Kant, the highest good is a perfect harmony of the disposition with the moral law, and he calls this *holiness*. This harmony must be possible for the moral being, not simply because it is the object of the will, but also because its possibility is implied in the command to realize this objective. But this harmony or holiness cannot be perfected by a rational being while existing

in a world of sense. So this goal which is looked upon as practically necessary can be realized only in an infinite progress toward genuine harmony with the moral law, and this infinite progress is possible only if the personality of a rational being continues an infinite existence. This is what Kant means by the immortality of the soul.[25]

Moral Argument Concluded

It is clear that the moral argument makes a significant contribution toward the proof of immortality. If human judgments are accepted at face value in our thinking and living, usually without question, then it is inconsistent and even inexpedient to discount their value when appearing as moral affirmations. And so when moral consciousness dictates its definite belief in an endless life, it is something to be reckoned with. And if there is postulated a rational universe initiated by a moral Intelligence, then with even greater emphasis do the conditions of the moral régime demand the immortality of the soul. This is so, not on the basis of reward and punishment chiefly, but from the standpoint of justice, which says it is right that there should be a better correspondence between the righteous striving after the good on the part of many people in this life and their achievements. Bigger and more potent than a belief in rewards and punishments as a factor in a favorable attitude toward a future life is the feeling that our visions, hopes, and plans, falling short in time, will be realized in another life. There is a fundamental principle involved in the position which says, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," showing itself elsewhere as the law of Karma; and if mankind is right in believing in this law, the seed of many good people's planting, if they are to enter into the benefits personally, must come to fruition in another life.

Before closing our discussion of a belief in an endless

[25] See Watson's *Selections From Kant*, pp. 294, 295.

life it would seem expedient to suggest a possible relation between immortality and two other topics, time and eternity, these three usually being regarded as somewhat akin to each other. And in bringing time into the foreground it is practical to carry along a discussion of another topic, its boon companion, space; this for two reasons: (1) because in the history of thought it has been customary to discuss the two together, and (2) it has been found in discussions of time and space with groups of men and women, taking each topic separately on the basis of such questions as, What form does it take, if any? Are you inside or outside of it? Do you move through it, or does it pass relative to you?, etc., that in the last analysis with a large number of persons the descriptions of the two are almost identical; that is, with many persons the actual working conceptions of time and space are practically one and the same, even though these individuals on first thought would probably deny the possibility of any such thing. Two prevailing attitudes are assumed toward space: it is looked upon (1) as an emptiness, a void; (2) as synonymous with extension or matter which really makes it a space-filling mass. But we must not allow ourselves to become confused with the complications of a foreign topic, and shall admit space into the discussion only in so far as it assists in the elucidation of our immediate problem.

Time, Immortality, and Eternity

A careful study of time always leads to the contemplation of its possible endlessness. And so a consideration of time and space pertains here not simply from the standpoint of the ordinary interpretation made of them, but also because they suggest an infinite reach. Belief in their boundlessness, first conceived by Bruno (1548-1600) and popular in modern thought, has received much encouragement from the Planetesimal Hypothesis in its bearing on the origin and development of life

Time and Space

and the world. While the materialist may consistently say the conception of their infinity harmonizes with belief in the indestructibility of matter (of course the philosophical spiritualist can say the same thing), yet it seems very definite that this idea has its greatest significance only when rooted in a spiritualistic interpretation of reality; that is, when we believe that all being is of the nature of mind or spirit as over against a material substance. The reader will remember being taught in childhood that "a sentence is a thought expressed in words," and so, using this as a point of departure, it seems that the so-called time-space manifold, *representing all physical phenomena,* may be regarded as a thought, projected from an infinite Mind, which has been coming into expression, each part of which as it comes to maturity and makes its contribution falls back into the ocean of final reality, perhaps to be called forth again and again in varying forms. This position which makes ultimate reality to be psychical or spiritual in nature and calls it physical when assuming visible, tangible forms, represents the time-space universe, all finite matter, as but a product of the "sphere" of final being, the source and soul of which, as such, is a greater Reality.

**Time and Space Continued**

In working out a consistent relation between time, immortality, and eternity, is it necessary that time and space be looked upon as objective realities, as is commonly done, or is it better to follow the lead of Kant and make them merely subjective, forms of perception, having to do with inner and outer experience, respectively, thus making them to be colored spectacles through which everything is seen and in terms of which all things coming into the mind are worked over? In philosophizing, the latter position seems to harmonize better with other well-established concepts; and yet after all may it not be possible and better to look in a direction different from both, and believe

that time and space are chiefly and merely qualities or properties characteristic of physical being, simply representing the limitations and finiteness of physical reality? time standing for the fact that all material forms will cease to be, that eventually they must experience dissolution, and space suggesting that all material things are finite in the sense that they are circumscribed or bounded. If the reader will bear in mind the outstanding properties of matter as well as the significance of the process of integration and disintegration which is going on continually, it will readily be seen that this interpretation makes time and space represent important facts in this general process, and in no way detracts from their traditional dignity. It would seem that when speaking of things being "temporal" and "spatial" persons mean no more than is referred to above.

Time, Immortality, and Eternity Concluded

Every person is compelled to think of reality, whether explained in terms of matter or spirit, as indestructible, and if this, then uncreated, which makes ultimate reality to be eternal, eternity being interpreted as a condition which has neither beginning nor ending; that is, duration without beginning and duration without end. Uncreated, indestructible reality then bespeaks an eternally existing fact. Thus when a soul is born, in a sense it may be said there is nothing new which has come into being, nothing except a new relation or organization of "particles" of ultimate reality; only the potency is eternal. And yet the difference in relation makes a newness, the whole creative program being looked upon as a process in which this final reality is assuming new forms, the highest form being that organization of reality known as human consciousness, mind, or soul; the higher or spiritual phenomena differing from physical only in the degree of complexity of organization of the "atoms" of ultimate reality. And the belief that the soul will not disintegrate; that

is, its peculiar and highly complex organization will never collapse, as over against the dissolution of things confined wholly to the time-space régime, is the basis of the doctrine of immortality. Thus "eternal form shall still divide the eternal soul from all beside" (Tennyson). This makes the soul as such to be, not eternal, but of never-ending duration, immortal. The soul knows no death; that which appears to be such, is transition. During its existence in time it is "housed" in its material frame, and when the seemingly dark curtain of physical death is rolled back, the soul gaining its freedom, becomes an integral part of an eternal program, its immortality consisting in its finding a place in the latter phase, the endless part of this eternal process; and as it achieves this end, rising above all ordinary temporal limitations, the "moments of Time are lost in the hours of Eternity's day." [26]

## QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT

1. Discuss the universality of the belief in immortality.
2. Have people in history concerned themselves more about the pre- or the post-existence of the soul? How about adherents of the Christian religion?
3. Compare the Christian idea of future existence with that of the ancient Egyptians.
4. Why did the Egyptians place so much emphasis on immortality?
5. Explain why the Egyptians attached so much significance to embalming.
6. Explain the Egyptian psychology of the *ka* and *ba*. Compare these with the Roman *genius*.
7. Give Plato's conception of the soul, together with facts as to its immortality. (See Cushman's *A Beginner's History of Philosophy*, Vol. I, pp. 144-146.)

[26] Byron, *To an Oak at Newstead.*

8. Look up Socrates' death-scene discussion in Plato's *Phædo* and explain the peace and optimism which characterized his last moments.
9. What is the average Christian's conception of the next life? What is the chief source of this conception?
10. Evaluate the worth of concrete explanations as to conditions in the future life, as found in the Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, and Christian religions.
11. Give a psychológical explanation of the popularity of the Greek Mysteries.
12. Psychologize the fact that the Zoroastrian religion presented an optimistic outlook regarding the ultimate outcome of life and the world.
13. Is there a correspondence between Islam's conception of immortality and the mental status of the Arabians in Mohammed's day?
14. Why was the idea of an underworld common among early peoples?
15. How did it happen that the abode of the soul was later transferred to the regions above? (In connection with this look up the Isis-Osiris myth of early Egypt.)
16. What is meant by metempsychosis?
17. State Plato's idea of transmigration.
18. Criticize belief in the transmigration of the soul.
19. In what way might this doctrine increase respect for life in general?
20. Explain the "Towers of Silence" in India.
21. Why does the average person dread the thought of death? Why is life so sweet?
22. Explain how belief in immortality helps to deaden the sting of death. Psychologize a situation in which a person does not dread dying, perhaps even wants to die.
23. Would you prefer to champion belief in a physical or spiritual resurrection?
24. Is the animal's fight for life related to the desire for immortality?

25. On the basis of man's reasons for belief in a future life is it necessary to ascribe immortality to animals?
26. Suggest what you think is the most desirable type of immortality.
27. Would immortality have the same significance apart from a belief in rewards and punishments?
28. Is the evidence at hand more in favor of or against immortality as a fact?
29. Suggest a consistent relation between time, immortality, and eternity.
30. Should the doctrine of immortality occupy a bigger place in the religious program of to-day?

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